

CHINESE  
CALLIGRAPHY

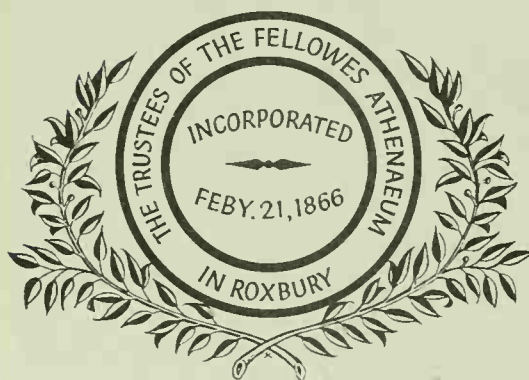


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# CHINESE CALLIGRAPHY





The character *shu* ("to write"), from the hanging scroll by Shih K'o-fa (no. 76)



*Tseng Yu-ho Ecke*

CHINESE  
CALLIGRAPHY

*David R. Godine in association with  
Philadelphia Museum of Art*



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## *Preface*

FEW FORMS OF EXPRESSION in the long history of the visual arts require the depth of visual sophistication needed to understand Chinese calligraphy. It is an ancient art with subtle traditions. At its best, calligraphy is an art in which the form of the expression must be in absolute harmony with the concept being presented; in its execution, the brilliance of the artist may have full expression.

With today's new curiosity about China and its culture, America has probably never been so ready for an exhibition presenting the evolution of this great art form. More important, the steadily growing concern nurtured by the succession of each day's frantic pressures that leads greater numbers of people to seek respite in mystical outlooks, creates greater receptivity to the intricacies of calligraphic art. Most important, however, the development of American art in the years since the Second World War has created a much broader acceptance of an art that is essentially abstract in its manner and its meaning.

Thus the Philadelphia Museum of Art has decided to gather these works together to present a history of Chinese calligraphy and, through the catalogue, to create a more general awareness of its aesthetic attitudes. The Museum's Curator of Far Eastern Art, Miss Jean Gordon Lee, has carried the responsibility for the creation of this exhibition. Working closely with Mrs. Tseng Yu-ho Ecke, she has studied the great body of material that is to be found in the United States, assessing its quality, and choosing some one hundred examples to suggest the brilliance of this great tradition.

The exhibition owes a great deal to Mrs. Ecke. Her scholarship in the field of calligraphy—clearly evident in this catalogue—is beyond doubt supported by her own brilliance as a painter. Indeed, she wrote the calligraphy that adorns the cover of this catalogue.

The distinguished collector, Mr. John M. Crawford, Jr., has been notably generous in his support; repeatedly his enthusiasm has provided welcome encouragement. The Museum owes a great debt of thanks to him and the other lenders. Each lender realizes how important time is as a factor in the enjoyment of distinguished calligraphy. Being able to see with leisure each of these treasures in a broader context will add immeasurably to the appreciation of its particular quality.

*Evan H. Turner*  
*Director*



## *Lenders to the Exhibition*

The Art Institute of Chicago  
The Art Museum, Princeton University  
Center of Asian Art and Culture, The Avery Brundage  
Collection, San Francisco  
The Cleveland Museum of Art  
John M. Crawford, Jr., New York  
Professor and Mrs. Gustav Ecke, Honolulu  
Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago  
Honolulu Academy of Arts  
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Litaker, Honolulu  
Los Angeles County Museum of Art  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston  
Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum, Kansas City  
Philadelphia Museum of Art  
Portland Art Museum, Oregon  
Private collection, Honolulu  
Colonel and Mrs. Edward W. Rosenbaum, Rydal, Pennsylvania  
Seattle Art Museum  
Laurence Sickman, Kansas City  
Colonel and Mrs. Tong-lao, Honolulu  
The University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor  
Wango H. C. Weng Collection, New York

## Foreword

THE GREEKS HAD A WORD FOR IT, *kalligraphia*, meaning “beautiful writing.” The Chinese used two words for it, *shu fa*, meaning “the system or method of writing.”

The term *kalligraphia* was used as early as the second century A.D. by Plutarch. Eventually it entered the vocabularies of many European languages. It is interesting to observe, however, that although the Greeks coined a word for beautiful writing, their alphabet was such that it did not lend itself to free written interpretations. Legibility and precision were the most important criteria of quality.

On the other hand, the Chinese term emphasizes the system or manner of writing. Although it is not clearly expressed, beauty is implicit in the term. The anonymous Chinese who is quoted as having said, “The essence of beauty in writing is not to be found in the written word but lies in response to unlimited change; line after line should have a way of giving life, character after character should seek for life-movement, expressed it well.

Chinese painting has long been known and admired for its aesthetic values in the West, but its inseparable counterpart, calligraphy, regarded even more highly by its creators, has only fairly recently begun to be appreciated. This is the first, but we hope not the last, exhibition of Chinese calligraphy to be held in the United States.

By assembling examples of almost every form of script used by the Chinese over a period of evolution continuing for well over three thousand years and by publishing this catalogue written by an outstanding Chinese artist, Tseng Yu-ho Ecke, trained not only in the classical Chinese tradition but also in the Western disciplines, we hope to open Western eyes to the delights, spirit, and wondrous facility of the Chinese masters of the brush.

From the early Chinese pictographic script, through the fully developed ideographs, to the elegant and lively variations on these themes by calligraphers of the Sung, Yüan, and Ming dynasties, a visual history is presented. Calligraphy on oracle bones, bronzes, and wood, examples preserved by engraving in stone and reproduced for students and connoisseurs by the process known as “rubbing,” as well as actual writing are presented in this exhibition.

Unfortunately almost all important original examples of script written on silk and paper in the early history of the art have long since been lost. However, the Chinese, realizing the impermanence of these media, cherishing and wishing to preserve the landmarks in their calligraphic history, devised a method for their preservation. Highly



prized and beautifully written texts were skillfully engraved on stone, examples of which are still treasured by the Chinese. In order to make these texts more readily accessible to many people, the technique of "rubbing" or "ink squeezing" was devised after the use of paper became more popular.

Actually the process does not entail either the acts of rubbing or squeezing. A sheet of thin paper is applied to the surface of the stone, dampened, and tamped into the engraved lines in the stone. With a soft pad dipped in ink the "rubber" then tamps the surface evenly, coating only the flat surfaces with the ink and leaving the engraved lines reserved in white in a negative reproduction of the inscription.

This exhibition has come into being only with the generous help of many people. To the lenders we owe a particular debt of gratitude not only for lending, but for having had the foresight to acquire such fine examples. We are indeed fortunate to have been able to avail ourselves of the kind offer of John M. Crawford, Jr., to lend so generously from his collection of Chinese calligraphy, the largest private American collection. Mr. Crawford's interest has been of inestimable help to us and his financial support has helped to defray the cost of this catalogue.

I would like to give heartfelt thanks to the people whose names follow, for without their help this exhibition could not have come to fruition. Professor Wen Fong and Mrs. Lucy Lo of The Art Museum in Princeton have been most generous in their cooperation. Dr. W. Allyn Rickett, Associate Professor of Chinese Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, and his wife, Dr. Adele Rickett, Lecturer in Chinese Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, have helped immeasurably in the preparation of the text of the catalogue. Mrs. Nancy Cheng, Librarian of the Chinese Library at the University of Pennsylvania, and Dr. Jonathan Chaves of Brooklyn College supplied translations. To the Editor, George H. Marcus; John Anderson, the Designer; and John F. Peckham of the Meriden Gravure Company a large debt is acknowledged. The following colleagues in Taipei, Dr. Li Chi, Director of the Academia Sinica; Dr. Chiang Fu-tsung, Director of the National Palace Museum; Chang Wu-yu also of the National Palace Museum; and Chang Peng-chuan of the Academia Sinica lent valuable assistance.

Other friends and colleagues who have been of great help I take pleasure in mentioning and having the opportunity to thank: Dr. Li Hui-lin of the Morris Arboretum in Philadelphia for his botanical advice; Dr. Froelich Rainey, Director, and Mr. David Crownover, Executive Secretary, of the University Museum for cooperating by lending supplementary material to the exhibition; and Dr. Lloyd W. Daly, Professor of Classical Studies at the University of Pennsylvania.

I must mention the kindness and cooperation of Mrs. Gertrude Toomey Miller, the Museum's Registrar. Mrs. Dianne T. Ooka, former assistant in the Department, and Miss Anne Li, summer assistant in this Department, were of tremendous help. Mrs. Dolores A. Graff and Miss Mary Cotter gave staunch support with their secretarial assistance.

*Jean Gordon Lee*  
*Curator of Far Eastern Art*

## *Acknowledgments*

THE SUCCESS OF AN EXHIBITION is always the result of a joint effort. Without the Museum staff's hard drive and the collectors' gracious support, an exhibition of this kind could not take place. It is the foresight of Dr. Evan H. Turner, Director, and Miss Jean G. Lee, Curator of Far Eastern Art, that has launched this exhibition. Calligraphy has always been the foremost and best-known art expression in the Far East. Its aesthetics have had influence also on the ideas of modern art. And yet, before this time, there has never been a major calligraphic exhibition in the United States. This seeming lack of interest may have been caused by the complexities of the historical and sinological aspects of the subject. The Philadelphia Museum of Art is to be congratulated for being the first American museum to initiate such a venture. This amazingly handsome collection has been assembled completely in the United States, and represents the high level of interest in calligraphy existing in this country today. Outstanding among the collectors are Mr. John M. Crawford, Jr., and Mr. and Mrs. Wango H. C. Weng, of New York.

Because the art objects are spread widely throughout the United States, I was able to examine only about half of them in the original; the rest were studied from photographs. This may serve as an explanation for certain omissions of the more obvious facts concerning the reading of seals, colophons, and the provenance of the objects. Then again, there is always the pressure of time in the research for a loan exhibition. I am most grateful to Dr. W. Allyn Rickett for his careful checking of the text, both the sinological and historical sources; for his help in making the Romanization of Chinese names and terms consistent; and for supplying the chronology of dynasties and the index. He made most valuable contributions. Dr. Jonathan Chaves, Mrs. Nancy Cheng, and Dr. Adele Rickett translated a number of the texts.

As for myself, I am grateful to Mrs. Duncan R. Seaman, Librarian of the Honolulu Academy of Arts, to Mrs. J. Scott B. Pratt, III, and to Mrs. Ernest A. Jackson, for their help in reading part of my text; and to my husband, Gustav Ecke, consultant in many directions. And finally, to the editor, Mr. George H. Marcus, whose thorough revision of the text as well as of the introduction, has helped to forge the reading into the present form.

There remains much more knowledge as yet to be uncovered and published about the art of calligraphy. The aesthetic involved in this art offers a timeless inspiration to our age. It is hoped that the increase in knowledge and interest derived from this exhibition will inspire many more calligraphic exhibitions to be held in the future.

*Tseng Yu-ho Ecke*  
*Honolulu, 1971*



# Chronology of Chinese Dynasties

|                                     |                           |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Shang (Yin)                         | Tr. 1766-1122 (1027) B.C. |
| Chou Period                         | Tr. 1122 (1027)-221       |
| Western Chou                        | Tr. 1122 (1027)-770       |
| Eastern Chou                        | 770-221                   |
| (Spring and Autumn Period, 722-481) |                           |
| (Warring States Period, 403-221)    |                           |
| Ch'in                               | 221-207                   |
| Han Period                          | 206 B.C.-A.D. 220         |
| Former (Western) Han                | 206 B.C.-A.D. 8           |
| Hsin (Wang Mang Interregnum)        | A.D. 9-23                 |
| Later (Eastern) Han                 | 25-220                    |
| Three Kingdoms Period               | 221-280                   |
| Wei                                 | 220-264                   |
| Shu Han                             | 221-263                   |
| Wu                                  | 221-280                   |
| (Western) Chin                      | 265-316                   |
| Northern and Southern Dynasties     | 317-589                   |
| Northern Dynasties                  |                           |
| Sixteen Kingdoms                    | 302-439                   |
| Northern (Yüan or T'o-pa) Wei       | 386-534                   |
| Western Wei                         | 535-556                   |
| Eastern Wei                         | 534-550                   |
| Northern Ch'i                       | 550-577                   |
| Northern Chou                       | 557-581                   |
| Southern Dynasties                  |                           |
| Eastern Chin                        | 317-420                   |
| Southern (Liu) Sung                 | 420-479                   |
| Southern Ch'i                       | 479-502                   |
| Liang                               | 502-557                   |
| Ch'en                               | 557-589                   |
| Sui                                 | 581-618                   |
| T'ang                               | 618-906                   |
| Five Dynasties Period               | 907-960                   |
| Sung Period                         | 960-1279                  |
| Northern Sung                       | 960-1127                  |
| Southern Sung                       | 1127-1279                 |
| Liao                                | 907-1199                  |
| Chin                                | 1115-1234                 |
| Mongol-Yüan Period                  | 1206-1368                 |
| Yüan                                | 1280-1368                 |
| Ming                                | 1368-1644                 |
| Ch'ing                              | 1644-1912                 |
| Republic                            | 1912                      |

Six (Southern) Dynasties Period

## Introduction

CALLIGRAPHY is the most direct form of all artistic expression. Just as each movement of the dancer is absolute, so every gesture of the calligrapher is essential. It is not the meaning of the character but the writing—the moment of execution and the action itself—that is important. Chinese calligraphic art does not only depend on the artist's intention; it is autographic, revealing the personality of each artist, and depends also on a mutual participation of calligrapher and viewer.

The structure of the character may be compared with that of the human body; its balance is architectural, arrived at through strict laws of construction. The square or round forms, loosely or tightly interlocked; the slow or fast motion; the composition of the characters all contribute to the mood and spirit of calligraphy. "Movement," according to Chiang Yee, the pioneer interpreter of this subject to the West, "is the very breath of Chinese calligraphy."<sup>1</sup> "Rhythmic vitality," as Yang Lien-sheng calls it in his essay, is the most significant aspect in judging the beauty of this art.<sup>2</sup>

Profound studies of the art of calligraphy have been undertaken by the Chinese through the ages.<sup>3</sup> These consist of detailed discourses concerning the structure of the writing, how the brush is held, how, stroke by stroke, each character is constructed. The observations by great masters of calligraphy, however, should not be regarded as uncompromising rules, for the wisdom of others cannot always become one's own wisdom. The act of writing is a vital part of the experience of the dedicated calligrapher, and the true calligraphic artist is one who knows how to absorb the tradition without being enslaved by it.



Fig. 1 The character *kè* ("to come or go") in regular script inscribed in the three basic grids



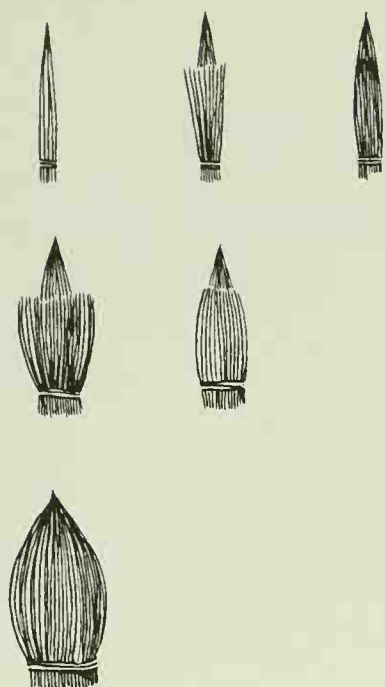


Fig. 2a Construction of the brush

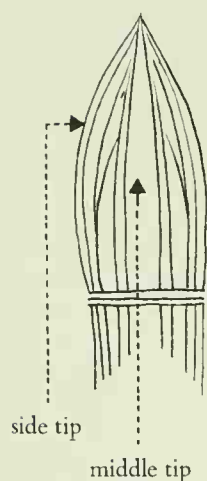


Fig. 2b Parts of the brush

The Chinese have had an ideographic language for more than three thousand years. It is composed vertically, from top to bottom, in columns proceeding from right to left. In writing the individual character, however, the movement goes from top to bottom and from left to right. It has generally been suggested that the custom of vertical writing was evolved during the late Chou and Han dynasties from the early book form composed of narrow bamboo or wooden tablets, tied together and bound in sets (no. 6). Each tablet contained a single line of characters written with the grain from top to bottom. However, vertical writing on Shang-Yin oracle bones (no. 1) and in the bronze inscriptions of the Shang and Chou dynasties (nos. 2, 3) fully establishes its earlier existence.

The structure of the character, built of lines and dots, is discussed extensively in books on Chinese calligraphy, and so is not treated here.<sup>4</sup> In order to learn proper structure, the writer should begin by mastering the plain regular script, and only then attempt the other styles. According to Chao Meng-chien (1199-1267, no. 28), in order to achieve proper balance, the writer should draw a wall around a cross, with the vertical and horizontal lines of his character being ruled by the center of the cross. This provides stability and evenness. The character should not have one side too high or too low, or one side off on a slant. Otherwise the scaffolding will fall apart. Chao Meng-chien explains that this grid method holds the strokes together and it is only after this has been mastered that personal style and moods of calligraphy should develop, for "bone structure" is the prerequisite of calligraphy.<sup>5</sup>

When calligraphy is taught in school, a grid, generally of red lines and commonly referred to as a "red-copy" sheet, is used for guidance. Three of the elementary grid types are illustrated (fig. 1), showing how a character in regular script is constructed within a square. Once this principle of structure is understood, the grid system is no longer needed and the character is produced freely. Characters in small seal, official, and regular scripts are neatly contained within their square areas. Sometimes the placement of the characters is also matched horizontally from one column to the next (*see* nos. 7, 14, 26, 48, 50). In other styles, however, the characters are not necessarily of uniform size and are not restricted to their squares. In running and cursive scripts, the characters are always more dramatically mixed, incorporating both large and small elements, so that the mood and rhythms are much more pronounced.

According to a short essay of uncertain authorship, *Chiu-sheng-fa* ("The Method of the Nine Living Conditions"), there are nine conditions essential to the art of calligraphy: The Living brush, which is soft but firm; the Living paper, which has the quality to accept ink and brush; the Living ink-stone, which preserves the ground ink; the Living water, which should be clean and fresh; the Living ink, which should be newly ground and properly mixed, not too light, not too heavy; the Living hand, which should not be slowed by a tired arm, causing unsureness of the lines; the Living spirit, which is quiet and contemplative, being relaxed; the Living eye, which is keen and properly rested; the Living view, which is clear and in good light, yielding unfettered inspiration.<sup>6</sup> With these "Nine Living Conditions" blossoms the art of calligraphy.

The basic tools of painting and calligraphy, commonly referred to as the "Four Treasures" in a Chinese artist's study, are paper, ink, ink-stone, and brush-pen. Great care was taken in the production of these tools, and the height of their refinement was reached in the eleventh century A.D. Paper, ink, brush, and ink-stone makers were greatly respected, and cited for their fine craftsmanship.

After true paper was invented (attributed to Ts'ai Lun in about A.D. 105), it

quickly became favored by the artist-calligrapher because of its variety of texture and finish, and largely replaced fabrics of silk and other materials that had long been used for painting and writing. Some papers are rough and absorb ink quickly like a sponge; others have a smooth surface, which resists the ink. Artists are careful to select the type of paper that best suits their own style. The papers preferred by artists are made of mulberry bark, hemp fiber, or bamboo pulp. Often old paper is chosen, for it seems to mellow with age.

The true black ink was not used until the Later Han dynasty (about the first or second century A.D.), although a black pigment had been used for brush drawing on Neolithic pottery (third-second millennium B.C.), and black lacquer, for writing and painted design in the late Chou dynasty. The ink is made of a mixture of lampblack and glue forming a claylike paste, which is put into a wooden mold and dried. When the mold is removed, the dry stick, or ink cake, is ready to be ground on stone, and mixed with fresh water. When the water turns black and reaches a creamy consistency, the ink is ready for use.

The earliest surviving ink-stones are made of earthen bricks, and date from the Later Han dynasty. Although ink-stones may be made of precious materials, such as jade, certain types of more common stone have been preferred by the artist. Smooth stones selected from the quarry of Tuan-ch'i (Kwangtung Province), for example, are regarded today as the finest. Often the ink-stone is engraved with a design and the surface highly polished, the smooth texture facilitating the fine grinding of ink.

The brush-pen originated in China in the Neolithic period, and the painted Yang-shao pottery (third-second millennium B.C.) shows evidence of a splendid early brush art. Further evidence of brush writing in vermilion is found on Shang-Yin oracle bones from about the thirteenth century B.C. The earliest extant brush, made of a bamboo stem with a tuft of rabbit hair, was excavated at the late Chou site of Changsha (Hunan Province). Brush holders are generally made of bamboo or wood, but jade, ivory, porcelain, lacquered wood, or other valuable materials are also used. The tuft is made of animal hair—most commonly from deer, goats, hares, and wolves; less frequently from horses, pigs, camels, rats, and humans—or of bird feathers. In exceptional cases, vegetable fibers have also been used (see no. 42). The part of the animal's body from which the hair is taken and the season in which it is collected affect the quality of the brush.

Brushes vary in size. Some are small as a grain of rice, others are long and thin, and still others are short and thick. A bunch of bristles tied together forms the central core of the tuft; the thickness of the brush can be increased by adding layers of covering hair to the core (figs. 2a and b).

For a proper appreciation of calligraphy, it is necessary to understand certain aspects of the technique and intricacies of handling the brush. In the early fourteenth century, Ch'en I-tseng elaborated the arm and finger positions and procedures used in making a brushstroke:

#### METHOD OF USING THE WRIST

- Chen-wan* wrist resting on a support (finger motion)
- T'i-wan* wrist raised and supported on the table by the elbow (wrist motion)
- Hsüan-wan* wrist suspended (shoulder motion)

#### METHOD OF HOLDING THE BRUSH

- Ts'o-kuan* picking up the brush (fig. 3)
- Ts'u-kuan* arranging the fingers around the brush (fig. 4)

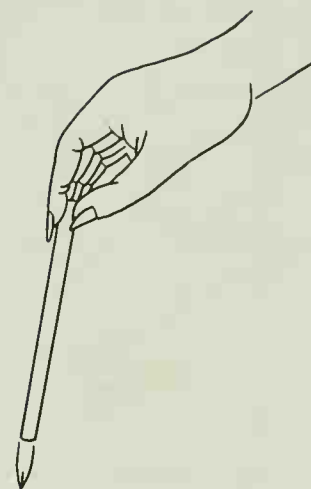


Fig. 3 Picking up the brush  
(*ts'o-kuan*)

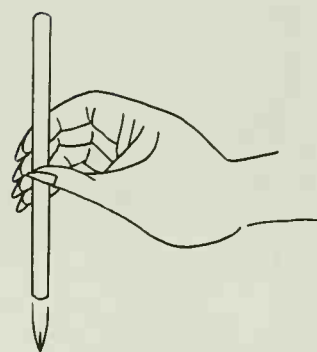


Fig. 4 Arranging the fingers  
around the brush (*ts'u-kuan*)

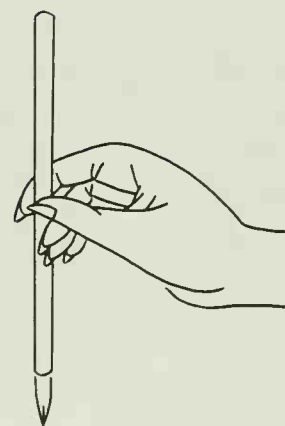


Fig. 5 Grasping the brush  
with two fingers  
(single hook, *nieh-kuan*)



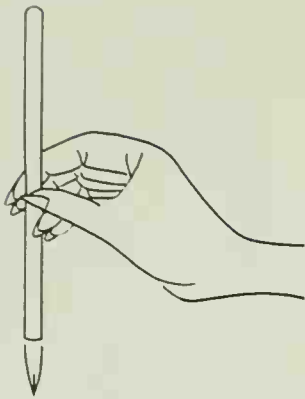


Fig. 6 Grasping the brush with three fingers (double hook, *nieh-kuan*)

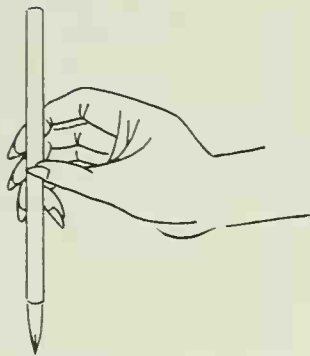


Fig. 7 Grasping the brush with four fingers (*wo-kuan*)

#### Action of the brush

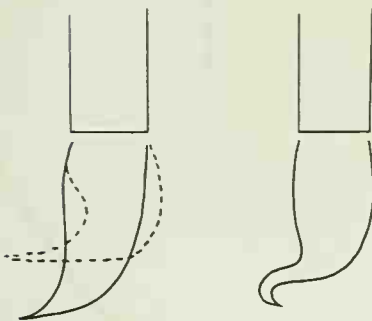


Fig. 8a Exposed tip (*lu-feng*)



Fig. 8b Concealed tip (*ts'ang-feng*)

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <i>Nieh-kuan</i> | grasping the brush with two or three fingers (figs. 5 and 6) |
| <i>Wo-kuan</i>   | grasping the brush with four fingers (fig. 7)                |

#### METHOD OF USING THE FINGERS

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| <i>Yeh</i>   | pulling under (using the middle tip)              |
| <i>Ya</i>    | pressing down                                     |
| <i>Kou</i>   | hooking   |
| <i>Chieh</i> | lifting up or raising                             |
| <i>Ti</i>    | resisting (the tip moves against the paper grain) |
| <i>Chü</i>   | warding off (brush moves from right to left)      |
| <i>Tao</i>   | leading (brush moves toward the writer)           |
| <i>Sung</i>  | sending (brush moves away from the writer)        |

At the beginning and the end of a stroke the tip of the brush may be either exposed (*lu-feng*, fig. 8a) or concealed (*ts'ang-feng*, fig. 8b). The movement is determined by the middle tip (fig. 2b), which produces round-tip strokes (*yüan-feng*, fig. 9a) and folding-tip strokes (*che-feng*, fig. 9b); or by the side tip (fig. 2b), which produces the turning-tip strokes (*chuan-feng*, fig. 9c) and twisting-tip strokes (*hsüan-feng*, fig. 9c).

Quality of brushstroke is often characterized by the vital terms, "flesh" (*jou*), "bone" (*ku*), "muscle" (*chin*), and "blood" (*hsüeh*). "Flesh" refers to the fullness of the tip and the method of delivery of the ink that gives a full and broad line. By controlling the pressure of the tip on the paper, a regulated amount of ink is released, which allows the line to move without obvious turning and folding.

"Bone" is the result of middle-tip movements. With less pressure on the tuft, the line turns and folds, showing an angular movement. The appearance of the lines is more lean and articulated.

"Muscle" has to do with the point of the tuft, whether it is concealed or exposed, whether the lines are widely separated from one another or are linked by a thin thread. The action of the strokes moves up and down, left and right, grouping related characters into an organic whole.

"Blood" concerns the quality of the ink. As the line flows in swelling rhythms, the wetness and the dryness of the brushstrokes create varied ink tonalities.

The terms used to describe the compositional merits are *feng-shen* ("style" and "inspiration") and *ch'i-shih* ("dynamic energy" and "force"). Chiang K'uei (c. 1155-c. 1221), of the Sung dynasty, who provided the supplement to the *Shu-p'u* ("Treatise on Calligraphy") by Sun Kuo-t'ing (act. 648-703), explained "style" and "inspiration" in this way:

Those who possess style and inspiration must have a superior character and follow true antiquity, employ the best paper and brush, be adventurous and alert, be highly intelligent, use ink that is glossy and rich, observe proper structural relationships, and possess originality. With these qualities, his long strokes will appear like a well-groomed scholar; his short strokes, like a fiercely resolute disciple; his lean strokes, like an emaciated resident of mountains and marshes; his fat strokes, like a gentleman of leisure. His strong strokes will be like a soldier; his graceful strokes, like a beautiful woman; his slanting strokes, like a drunken deity; and his upright strokes, like a Confucian gentleman.<sup>8</sup>

Such consciousness of personal qualities became even more distinct with Su Shih (1036-1101):

The configurations produced by the brush and ink are dependent on form. However, having form, they are also bound to have defects. If perchance one has not attained the realm of nothingness, but indulges in momentary pleasure, [calligraphy] may occupy his mind so that he forgets his troubles. In my old age I still feel that calligraphy is more worthy than playing chess, for it does not have to avail itself of the external, but finds its preservation in the inner self.

The only calligrapher who attained the lofty state of sage and worthy was Yen Chen-ch'ing [709-785, no. 16]. In his calligraphy he did not initially strive for excellence and yet he was excellent. His cursive script even though perfected through accumulated study, at the moment of delivery came forth with a rush. . . . Although my own writing is not very good, it is completely original and does not follow the ancients. In this I find happiness.

Calligraphy must have spirit, vital force, bone, flesh, and blood. When one of these is missing, it cannot be called a work of art. The art of calligraphy is perfected out of the regular style and leads to the running script. One cannot master the cursive without first having mastered the regular. . . .

The world prizes those things that are most difficult. It is difficult to make the regular script seem graceful or the cursive appear solemn. It is difficult to make large characters appear compact and not disconnected or small characters appear spacious and uncramped.

There are no fixed rules for holding the brush. One must be free and relaxed. Ou-yang Hsiu [1007-1072] said, "When I cause my fingers to move, my wrist is not conscious of it." This reveals a marvelous sense of control. Strokes left and right, forward and back, may be slanting but they must be firm. Those that are up and down must be like a taut line. In this way the brush may be said to be correct. . . .

Some say it is possible to judge a man by his calligraphy, and thus a true gentleman or a petty person will be revealed by his writing. However, it appears neither fitting nor possible to judge a man by his appearance. How much more so is this then the case with a person's calligraphy. On the other hand, how is it that whenever I look at the calligraphy of Yen Chen-ch'ing, I long to see him in person. It is not only that I understand him as a man, but I tremble in awe as if I could see him castigating Lu Ch'i or railing against Li Hsi-lieh [his deadly enemies].<sup>9</sup>

The second compositional requisite is "dynamic energy" and "force" (*ch'i-shih*), the result of an execution that is almost "automatic." The action of the hand and brush is so facile that the writer is not aware of them as intermediary tools. This mastery is what gives life to the written character. Calligraphy, while circumscribing a figure, conveys the spirit of its creation in the action of "becoming." Communication is achieved not only through the meaning of the word, but also in its visual impact. The tension of a line is sometimes described as "a dewdrop about to fall" or "a needle suspended in the air." A constantly changing and unpredictable configuration is what supplies the vitality.

According to a work attributed to Ts'ai Yung (A.D. 133-192), who may be ascribed as the first writer to have intellectualized the "inherent naturalness" in calligraphic art:

Calligraphy is a releasing. If a person wishes to write he first must release what is in his heart. Being free in regard to his manners and emotions, he then may begin to write. . . . By first sitting in silence with quiet thoughts he may grasp

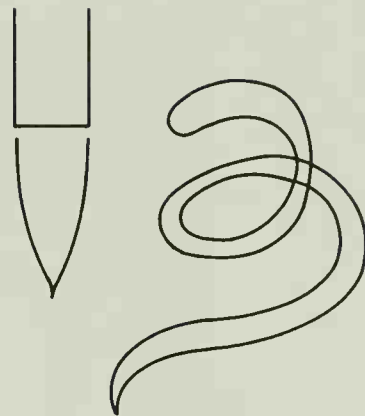


Fig. 9a Round tip  
(*yüan-feng*)  
and stroke

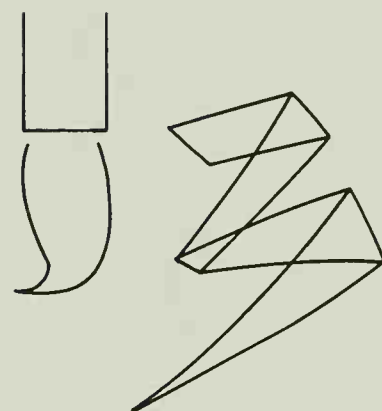


Fig. 9b Folding tip  
(*che-feng*)  
and stroke

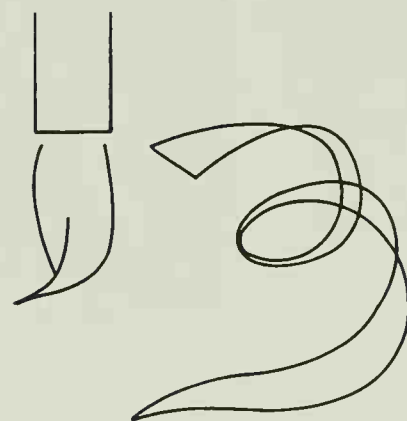


Fig. 9c Turning and  
twisting tip  
(*chuan-feng*) and (*hsüan-feng*)  
and stroke





Fig. 10 Ni Yüan-lu (1593-1644). *Crane and Banana Plant*  
Hanging scroll, ink and color on paper, 67" x 28½"  
Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

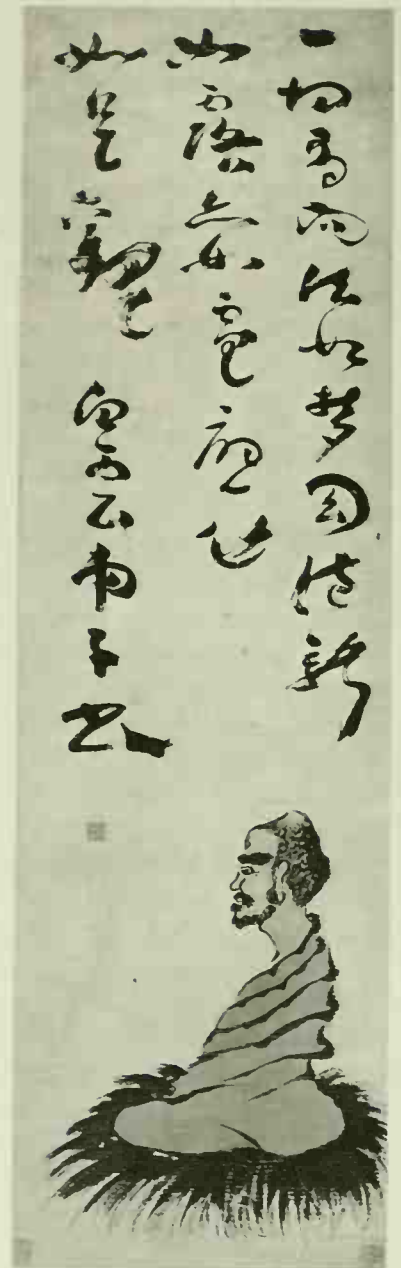


Fig. 11 Chin Nung (1687-1764),  
*Bodhidharma*, and Yang Fa (act. mid  
18th century), calligraphy of passage  
from the "Diamond Sutra." Hanging  
scroll, ink and color on paper,  
39 7/8" x 11 3/4". Wango H. C. Weng  
Collection, New York

ideas as they come. Words no longer issue from his mouth; the mind no longer thinks. Deep and mysterious, spiritual and beautiful, nothing could be more perfect. The characters may appear to be sitting or walking, flying or moving, going away or coming back, sad or happy, like Spring or Summer, Autumn or Winter, like a bird pecking for food or an insect eating away wood, like a sharp knife or dagger, or a strong bow and arrow, like water and fire, like trees and clouds, like the sun and moon following their course. Such is calligraphy.<sup>10</sup>

Beginning with Ts'ai Yung, aesthetic discussions of this type became prevalent in China. In time the *literati* and intellectuals claimed the rightful authority to judge and practice the art of painting and calligraphy.

The ninth-century art historian Chang Yen-yüan properly stressed the similarity in the fundamentals of the arts of painting and calligraphy.<sup>11</sup> Yang Wei-ch'en (1296-1370) said: "Calligraphy flourished in the Chin dynasty [265-420]. Painting flourished in the T'ang dynasty [618-906]. By the Sung dynasty [960-1279] painting and calligraphy are one and the same [art]."<sup>12</sup> In the eleventh century, such artists as Su Shih and Mi Fu (1051-1107, no. 22) developed a painting style that was based entirely on the aesthetics of calligraphy; they turned against realistic rendering in painting, and worked toward graphic stylization. Monochrome ink painting completely overshadowed works in color. These artists preferred to work in what has been called the "untrammeled" (*i-p'in*) manner, which came to be considered the highest stage in the intellectual school of painting.

Because their approach to painting emphasized direct transmission of intuitive truth by the instinctive intelligence of man, the "untrammeled" class has been identified with Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism, and it has been thought that this philosophy was its principal influence. However, beside the actual Ch'an priest-artists, the "untrammeled" class included such scholars as Li Kung-lin (1049-c. 1100), Su Shih, Huang T'ing-chien (1045-1105, no. 21), Mi Fu, Liang K'ai (twelfth century), and other intellectually inclined artists. Clearly the movement's philosophy of the spirituality of man evolved from a blending of the precision of Confucianism with the freedom of Taoism and the profundity of Buddhism. It is impossible to distinguish any one of these elements in any individual or in any metaphysical writings of the period.

Calligraphy, in its abstract nature, represents "perception." Its fast execution depends on intuitive awareness. Its abstract nature embodies the transcendental experiences that are evocative and can be associated with "enlightenment." But because this experience can be recreated by master artists in their practice of painting and calligraphy, it is not the same as a religious enlightenment that might ultimately release man from his troubled world. For this reason the "untrammeled" class of painting is an aesthetic, not a religious fulfillment. Ch'an Buddhism merely appropriated or defined more explicitly the aesthetic experience, which then became a vehicle for a nonscriptural transmission of Ch'an wisdom.

The aesthetics of calligraphy had great influence on the abstract tendency in Chinese painting. The "untrammeled" class, for example, abbreviated images like a "shorthand" cursive script. So condensed is it in form, that its reduction to basic elements recalls that of pictographic Shang engraved writings. The difference between these idioms, however, is that in the "untrammeled" manner, line expresses emotion and impulse.

This concept has certain parallels in contemporary Western art. There has been a long evolution since the early twentieth century discovery that line, brush motion, abstract shape, and color can embody emotional impulses and convey a





Fig. 12 Hsü Wei (1521-1593). *Sixteen Flowers and poem*  
Hanging scroll, ink on paper, 10'11" x 39"  
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Purchased, Fiske and Marie Kimball Fund



Fig. 13 Li Shan (1711-after 1754). *Bamboo and Calligraphy*  
Hanging scroll, ink on paper, 52" x 29 1/4"  
Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

deeper meaning. In recent decades, many artists have strived for a spontaneous and unpremeditated expression of lines and shapes, making manifest their unconscious feelings. The abstract expressionists, action painters, *tachistes*, the School of Paris with its calligraphic lyricism, and the West Coast artists have all shared the enthusiasm for the "living" line. While Eastern artists contemplated the execution of calligraphy in their disciplined way, Westerners in a free, emotional, and expressionistic manner arrived at analogous results.

Hans Hartung has referred to his art as "writing" (*écriture*). The critic René de Solier has commented on his work: "No metaphysics but a direct manner, an acute, meditative power which speaks without word. . . ." <sup>13</sup> His free network of lines determines the space around it. Rhythm is decisively predominant, but his work, nevertheless, has its own deliberate intention. Mark Tobey, whose "white writing" was based on actual study of the art of Chinese calligraphers, spoke of the potential of line: "Multiple space bounded by involved white lines symbolize higher states of consciousness." <sup>14</sup> *Le délire calligraphique* is the term Georges Mathieu gave to his own painting. In his and Jackson Pollock's art, "gesture" emerges as the most important element, though their styles are distinct and highly individual. Pierre Soulages identifies the execution of his paintings with a poetic experience; his structures symbolize events that have transformed him. Until very recently, contemporary art has continued its evolution toward the "reduction" of its means, and a renunciation of petty sentiment. Shen Hao (1586-1661) spoke of brush art: "One drop of ink contains a world, an infinity of time, all manifest to the heart." <sup>15</sup> How magnanimous this drop would be! Aesthetic fulfillment can be revealed in the gesture of a drop, *une tache*, and a drip.

Chinese painting co-existed with calligraphy, and thus never became pure abstraction. No matter how stylized and reduced to almost calligraphic expression, painting always remained representational and retained a specific lyrical feeling that may be associated with the mood and moment the artist was reproducing. In the pure abstract vision of calligraphy, on the other hand, a mood is present, but it is never specific and never descriptive.

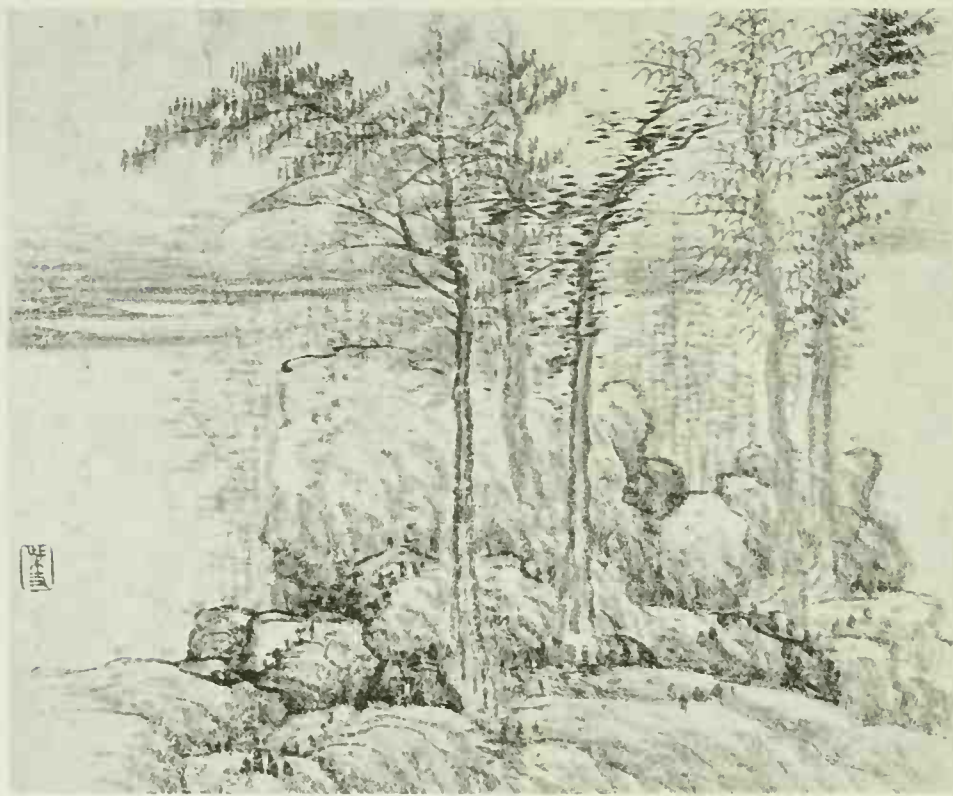
For almost every style of Chinese painting there is one element or another related to the brush technique of calligraphy. Wang Shih-chen (1526-1590) said:

Painting a bamboo stem is like writing seal script, its branches like cursive script, its leaves like regular script, and its joints like the official script. The trees painted by Kuo Hsi [1020-1090] and T'ang Ti [1296-c. 1364], the bamboo painted by Wen Yü-k'o [Wen T'ung, 1018-1079], and the grapes painted by Wen Jih-kuan [thirteenth century] are all derived from the cursive script. These paintings resemble calligraphy. As to the forms of calligraphy, the seal and official scripts resemble such things as goose heads, tiger claws, the wind-bent stems of leeks, rolling waves, dragons, phoenixes, unicorns, turtles, fish, insects, clouds, birds, magpies, geese, cows, rats, monkeys, chickens, dogs, rabbits, and tadpoles. The method of writing may be likened to drawing with a stick in the sand, pressing a seal into its ink, or breaking a hairpin. It may be like the traces of leaks in a roof, rocks falling from a high cliff, an old withered vine, or a startled snake slithering off into the grass. It may also be compared to a dragon leaping, a tiger sleeping, playing in the surf, wandering in the sky, a beautiful woman, a Taoist immortal, the sun setting or the moon rising. . . . Thus calligraphy and painting are indeed the same. <sup>16</sup>





Fig. 15 Kung Hsien (1620-1689). *Landscape*. Album leaf, ink on paper, 6¼" x 7⅝"  
The Art Museum, Princeton University



謝庭滿砌香葉，含雨露蜂蝶。  
搖不知令人想丰度。  
徐江全







Fig. 14 Wang Wen (1497-1576). *Pine*. 1538  
Handscroll, ink on paper, 12½" x 57"  
The Art Museum, Princeton University



Fig. 16 Chou Shih-ch'en (act. early 17th century). *Orchids and Rocks* (detail). 1606  
Handscroll, ink and slight color on paper, height 12⅛"  
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Purchased, J. Stoddell Stokes Fund

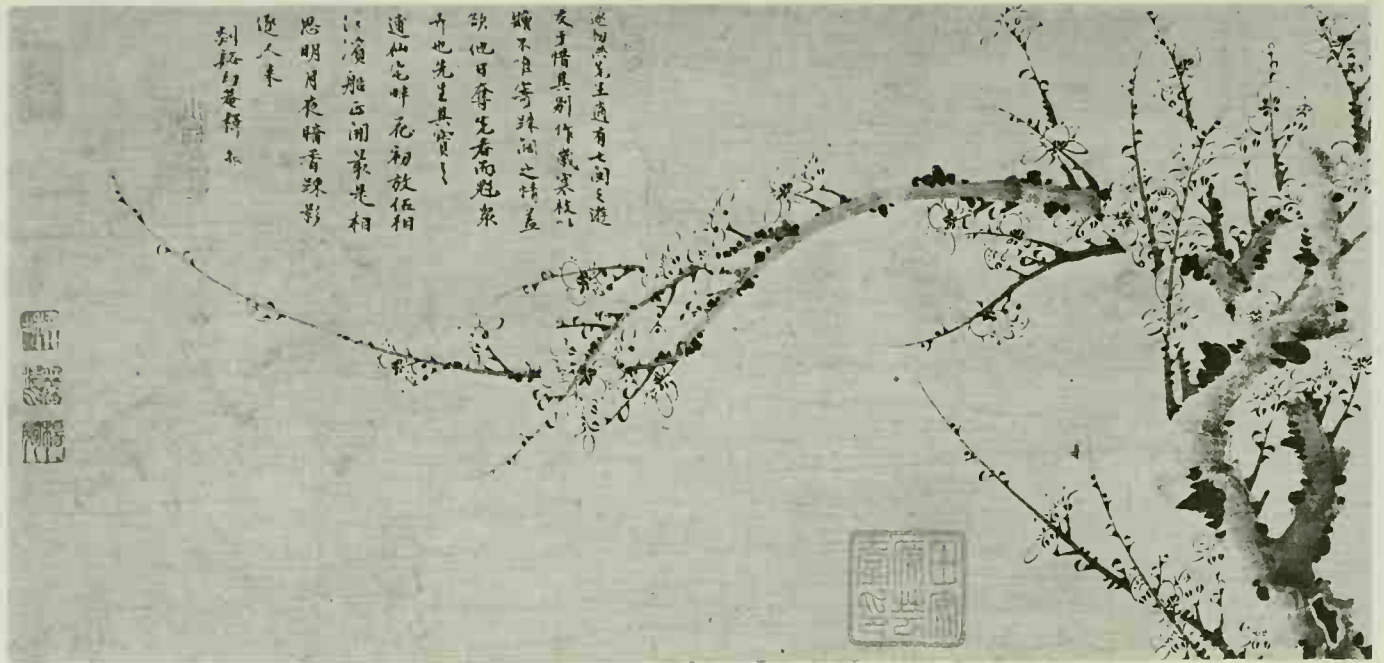


Fig. 17 Yang Hui (act. c. second half 14th century), *Flowering Plum Branch*,  
and inscription and poem by the Priest Huang-an  
Hanging scroll, ink on paper, 11  $\frac{7}{8}$  "x 24  $\frac{5}{8}$  "  
Seattle Art Museum, Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection



Fig. 18 Cheng Hsieh (1693-1765). *Misty Bamboo on a Distant Mountain*. 1753  
Four hanging scrolls, ink on paper, 69  $\frac{3}{4}$  "x 26  $\frac{3}{4}$  " (each)  
The Art Museum, Princeton University



In calligraphy, the brush-pen is always held perpendicular, while it may be inclined at any angle and in any direction in painting. In *Crane and Banana Plant* by Ni Yüan-lu (fig. 10) and *Sixteen Flowers* by Hsü Wei (fig. 12), the use of the side tip flatly applied with soft strokes to give the “boneless” feeling is evident. In the landscape of Kung Hsien (fig. 15), rubbing actions were employed; they may also be seen in the pine tree by Wang Wen (fig. 14). On the whole, their lines and dots are written down as calligraphic strokes. In the painting of orchids by Chou Shih-ch'en (fig. 16), the leaves are prolonged strokes, and the rocks are in “flying white” (*fei pai*—executed so quickly that the hairs of the brush spread, exposing the paper), done with open tuft and dry brush. Flesh, bone, blood, and muscle are movingly visible in these works.

The placement and position of the elements in a composition are adjusted to the size and shape of the painting: they are either in the center, and do not touch the edge, as in the *Bodhidharma* by Chin Nung (fig. 11), or spill out of the painting as if they were cut off abruptly, as the pine tree by Wang Wen, *Flowering Plum Branch* by Yang Hui (fig. 17), *Misty Bamboo on a Distant Mountain* by Cheng Hsieh (fig. 18), and *Bamboo and Calligraphy* by Li Shan (fig. 13). The painting of bamboo, plum trees, and orchids was a specialty of the Sung and Yüan artists, a number of whom published important treatises on the painting of bamboo and plum. The brush movement in these subjects is exactly like writing the various types of script. Painted areas enrich the unpainted areas, and are consciously balanced against one another. The space that divides the composition is part of the design.

In the Ming and Ch'ing dynasties, seal engraving, a branch of calligraphic art deeply concerned with composition, became very popular (fig. 19). Seals are part of an artist's or collector's signature, generally written in ancient scripts. They had been used in China for documentary purposes from Shang-Yin times on, and some handsomely designed seals of the Han and T'ang dynasties are still known to us today. About the eleventh century, with the impetus provided by the artist Mi Fu and Emperor Hui-tsung (r. 1100–1125), the collector's seal began to be widely used.

Among the noted artists who engraved their own seals were Chao Meng-fu (1254–1322, nos. 30, 31), Wen Cheng-ming (1470–1559, nos. 48–51, fig. 19a), and his son Wen P'eng (1498–1573, no. 43B). Traditionally they are considered the finest seal-engraving artists. By the eighteenth century, most artists in painting and calligraphy were also seal engravers, and *chin shih shu hua* (“metal [bronze] and stone [engraving art], calligraphy, and painting”) were considered to be the four studies pursued by a cultivated artist.

Because the working surface is necessarily small, seal art demands a much more rigid sense of control of space. The outer edge of the stone, *i.e.*, the frame, is an integral part of the composition. The positive (red) and negative (white) areas are of equal importance, with the lines and the space between them sharing a structural tension. The relationships are intense and acute; therefore a greater sensibility is necessary to create a dynamic design.

With the understanding of calligraphy, the artist can capture form, value, and character in a single stroke. Chinese artists, defining reality through basic simplicity, are thus able to project into their art an incredible “totality,” an overall unity. Chinese calligraphy with its abstract nature has been cosmic and micro-cosmic, and thus can contain “a world, an infinity of time, [and make it] all manifest to the heart.” Perhaps the most inclusive reference on the basic simplicity of Chinese art is the treatise *Hua yü lu* (“Notes on Painting”) by Tao-chi (1641–c. 1720, nos. 83, 84). The first chapter is on the “one-stroke” (*i-hua*):



Fig. 19a  
Seal: “Heng-shan” (from no. 50)  
by Wen Cheng-ming (1470–1559)



Fig. 19b  
Seal: “Wei-i chang” (from no. 90)  
by Cheng Hsieh (1693–1765)

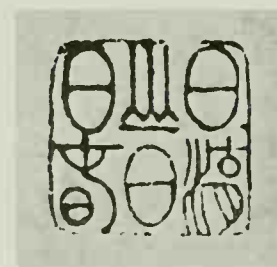


Fig. 19c  
Seal: “Jih-yü-shan jih jih ch'un”  
 (“At Mount Jih-yü, everyday  
is Spring”; from no. 94)  
by Teng Shih-ju (1743–1805)



This "one-stroke" is the origin of all existence, the root of ten thousand forms. It is observed by spiritual reality. . . . Merely rely upon the grasp of the understanding of men. It can, by this "one stroke," embrace everything in miniature. . . . So it is said: "My *Tao* unifies by "one stroke."<sup>17</sup>

This sensibility is simple but subtle. If possessed by the artist, as it turns magic into reality, a life is given to inanimate form. If the artist does not have this sensibility, what he produces may be only a shallow outline. The measure of an artist depends on what degree of "realization" he has reached.

## Notes

1. Chiang Yee, *Chinese Calligraphy: An Introduction to Its Aesthetic and Technique*, London, 1938, p. 125.
2. Lien-sheng Yang, "Chinese Calligraphy," in *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.*, New York, 1962, p. 45; and in *Catalogue of the Exhibition of Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.*, New York, 1962, p. 52.
3. The traditional literature on this subject is too extensive to cite here. Recently, however, important additions have been made to this bibliography in the West. Beside the works by Chiang Yee and Yang Lien-sheng cited above (notes 1 and 2), the following should be mentioned: Richard M. Barnhart's "Wei Fu-jen's *Pi Chen T'u* and the Early Texts on Calligraphy," in *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America*, xviii (1964), pp. 13-25, gives an account of certain pre-T'ang and early T'ang treatises on calligraphy; and Tsuen-hsuei Tsien's *Written on Bamboo and Silk: The Beginnings of Chinese Books and Inscriptions*, Chicago, 1962, excellently summarizes ancient scripts and the tools of writing. Currently the German scholar Roger Goepper is preparing a translation of the monumental text of the *Shu-p'u* ("Treatise on Calligraphy"), dated 687, by Sun Kuo-t'ing. See also Lothar Ledderhose, *Die Siegelschrift (Chuan-shu) in der Ch'ing-zeit*, Wiesbaden, 1970.
4. The simplest and most popular discussion of the structure of the character is the *Yung tzu pa fa* ("Eight Components of the Character Yung") by Wang Hsi-chih (303-379). The version known to us today has a commentary by the fourteenth-century writer Li P'u-kuang. English translations of this essay can be found in many books on Chinese calligraphy. See, for example, "The Eight Laws of Yung," in Lucy Driscoll and Kenji Toda, *Chinese Calligraphy*, 2nd ed., New York, 1964, pp. 34-41.
5. Chao Tzu-ku (Chao Meng-chien), *Lun-shu-fu*, in *Shu-fa cheng chuan*, ed. Feng Wu, 1828, and republished in the *Kuo-hsiieh chi-pen ts'ung-shu chien-pien* (KHCPTSCP), Shanghai, 1936.
6. The *Han-lin chin ching*, ed. Wang Ju-li (eighteenth century), attributes the *Chiu-sheng-fa* to an anonymous author of the late eighth century. According to the *Shu-fa cheng chuan*, KHCPTSCP, I, p. 103, it is the work of the Mongolian calligrapher K'uei-k'uei (Tzu-shan), whose dates are 1295 to 1345. The commentary of the "Nine Living Conditions" varies in the different editions.
7. Ch'en I-tseng, *Han-lin yao chieh*, in *Shu-fa cheng chuan*, KHCPTSCP, I, pp. 4-5.
8. Chiang K'uei, *Hsü Shu-p'u*, 1202, in *Shu-fa cheng chuan*, KHCPTSCP, I, pp. 43-44.
9. These remarks are collected from several sections of Su Shih's *Tung-p'o chi*, *chüan* 4, in *Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng*, Shanghai, 1936, pp. 72-94.

10. Attributed to Ts'ai Yung, *Shu lun*, in *Shu-fa cheng chuan*, KHCPTSCP, I, p. 79.
11. Chang Yen-yüan, *Fa-shu yao lu*, before 847; and *Li tai ming hua chi*, 847. Cited by W. R. B. Acker, *Some T'ang and Pre-T'ang Texts on Chinese Painting*, Leiden, 1954, p. 82.
12. Yang Wei-chen, *Tung-wei-tzu chi*, in *Hua hsüeh hsin yin*, ed. Ch'in Tsu-yung, 1912, I, p. 36.
13. René de Solier, "Hans Hartung," *Quadrant*, II (1956), n.p. (extract).
14. Quoted in *Contemporary Calligraphers: John Marin, Mark Tobey, Morris Graves* (catalogue of an exhibition at the Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston), Houston, 1956, n.p.
15. Shen Hao, *Hua chu*. Translated in Osvald Sirén, *The Chinese on the Art of Painting*, Hongkong, 1963, p. 175.
16. Wang Shih-chen, *Ku-ching shu yüan*, in *Chung-kuo hua-hsüeh ch'üan-shih*, ed. Cheng Ch'ang, Shanghai, 1937, p. 415.
17. Tao-chi, *Ku-kua ho-shang Hua yü lu*. The quotation here has been translated by Karl Cole. See also translations in Osvald Sirén, *The Chinese on the Art of Painting*, Hongkong, 1963, pp. 184-86; and Lin Yu-t'ang, *The Chinese Theory of Art*, New York, 1967, pp. 140-41.





# CATALOGUE

## 1. Oracle Bone Script

Shang-Yin dynasty

“Oracle Bone” (engraved tortoise plastron, length 7¼”) in the  
Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China

c. 1339–1281 B.C.

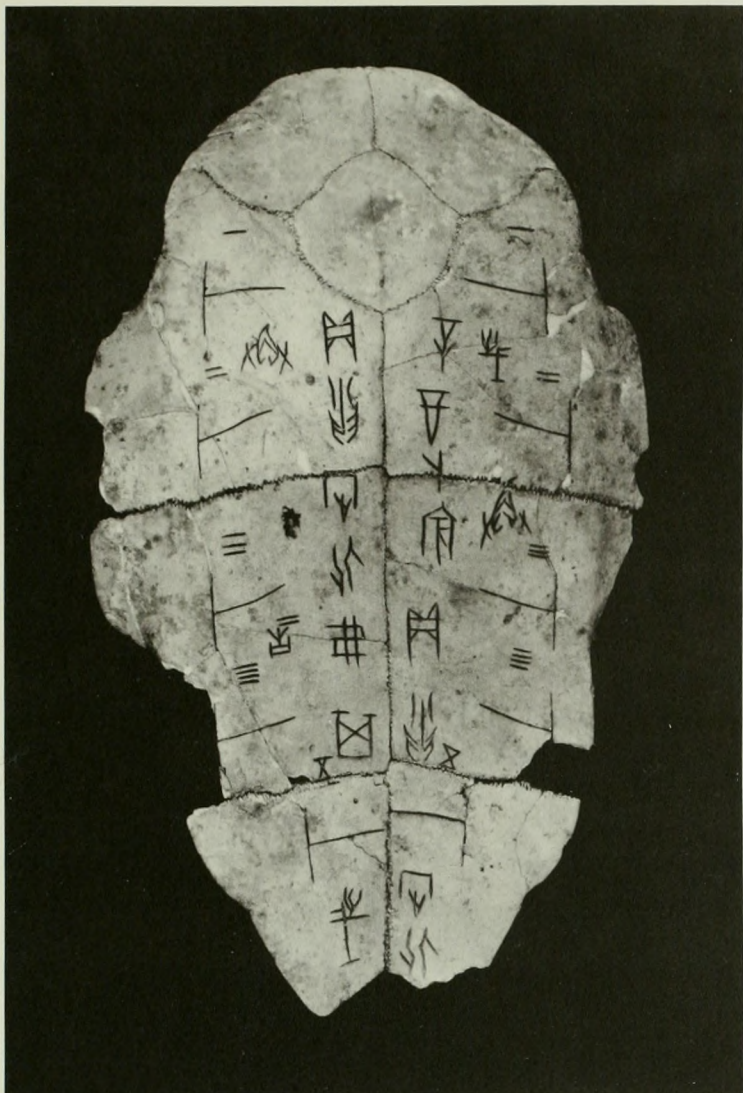
Photograph

Among the earliest known examples of the Chinese script, dating from the bronze civilization, are the engravings on animal bones and tortoise shells. They are usually referred to as “oracle bone inscriptions” (*chia-ku-wen*). Since the turn of this century, tens of thousands of these have been unearthed at Hsiao-t'un near An-yang (Honan Province), the site of the capital of the Shang-Yin dynasty. Such “bones” were used for divination (*pu-tz'u*): the bone or shell was placed on fire, which made it crack, and omens were read from the resulting patterns. After extensive study by many scholars, the script has been deciphered. The writings give a vivid picture of this ancient period, describing many details of daily life.

On some of the oracle bones, vermilion may be seen within the engraving, indicating that the script was first written with a brush and then engraved. The brush had been used earlier as a tool for painting on the pottery of the Neolithic Yang-shao culture (third–second millennium B.C.), coinciding with the emergence of Chinese civilization.

Structure and size of the script vary, and the characters have been found written in many different ways. Generally the inscription is read vertically in columns from top to bottom. The free arrangement of the characters is determined by the configuration of the bone or shell, their accidental positions imparting a natural charm to the inscriptions. The thin strokes predominate and give the impression of having been written with a pen instead of engraved.

The pictorial representations are less elaborate than with the later Shang cast-bronze inscriptions (no. 2). According to the archaeologist Tung Tso-pin (*Fifty Years of Studies in Oracle Inscriptions*, Tokyo, 1964), the style of the inscriptions changed gradually during the 273 years of the Shang-Yin dynasty. They may be divided into five epigraphical periods. This inscription is attributed to the first period (*Wu-ting*), dating about 1339 to 1281 B.C. Changes in style took various forms. There was an increase in the number of strokes without altering the meaning of the character; a progression toward complexity with additional meaning for each character—an evolution from pictographic representation to abstract symbolization.



|   |     |       |    |
|---|-----|-------|----|
| 一 | 貞   | 辛     | 一  |
| 二 | 咎   | 酉卜方貞  | 咎二 |
| 三 | 正化弗 |       | 貞三 |
| 四 | 其   | 咎五    | 咎四 |
|   | 咎   | 正(処)化 |    |

Transcription of characters into modern script  
 Courtesy of the Academia Sinica



## 2. Ancient Script

Shang dynasty

- A. Cast Inscription on a Bronze *Ting* in the Academia Sinica,  
Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China  
First quarter of the 13th century B.C.  
Ink rubbing (contemporary), 6" x 4 3/4"  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



*Ting*. First quarter of the 13th century B.C.  
Bronze; height to rim, 24 7/8"  
Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan,  
Republic of China

Many of the ritual bronze vessels of the Shang dynasty bear short cast inscriptions in what is called the "ancient script" (*ku-wen*). This inscription appears on one of a pair of oversized *ting*, decorated with stag and ox masks, found in the royal tomb in Hou-chia-chüan, Hou-kang (see illustration). According to Alexander Soper, they were "in the service either of Tsu Keng who died in 1274 . . . or of the ex-crown prince Chi. Their designs use the resources of the new style with a ponderous directness that suggests an early phase [of An-yang]." ("Early, Middle, and Late Shang: A Note," *Artibus Asiae*, xxviii, 1 [1966], p. 28). The inscription, a profile representation of a deer in full pictorial elaboration, is also an early feature. It shows the close relationship in ancient China between calligraphy and the painted image.

While painting was to become increasingly representational, calligraphy condensed the image into an abstract graph. The two arts separated, remaining so until the second century A.D. when calligraphy and painting once again shared the brush technique.

- B. Cast Inscription on a Bronze *Chüeh* (*Chui-fu-kuei chüeh*) in the National  
Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China  
13th–12th century B.C.  
Ink rubbing (contemporary), 1 3/8" x 1"  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



*Chui-fu-kuei chüeh*  
13th–12th century B.C.  
Bronze. National Palace  
Museum, Taipei, Taiwan,  
Republic of China

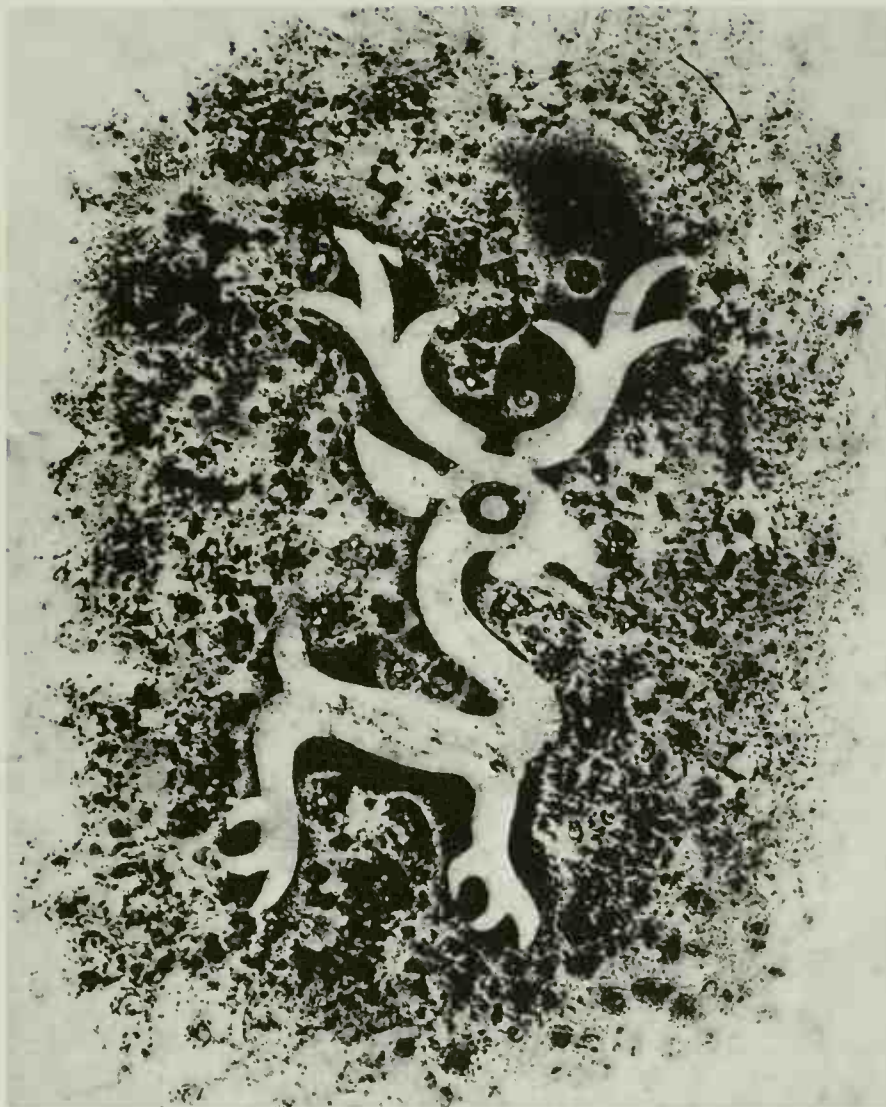
Three pictographs appear under the handle on the body of this *chüeh* (see illustration). Stylistically, the short legs and a heavy body place it in the early An-yang period. It is a developed form of the slender type of vessel from the pre-An-yang period found at the Honan Province sites, Cheng-chou and Liu-li-ko (Hui Hsien). The inscription, however, has features that would date it to the early Shang dynasty. The upper pictograph, *chui* ("bird"), is a schematic representation of a bird in profile, and appears this way on other vessels. It has been interpreted as the name of a clan. The other pictographs, *fu-kuei* ("father Kuei"), designate the title and name of the owner of the vessel or of the person who had it cast. This *chüeh* should probably be dated into an early phase of An-yang, during the thirteenth or twelfth century B.C.

- C. Cast Inscription on a Bronze *Kuei* (*Men-tsu-ting kuei*) in the National  
Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China  
11th century B.C.  
Ink rubbing (contemporary), 2 7/8" x 3 1/8"  
Philadelphia Museum of Art



*Men-tsu-ting kuei*  
11th century B.C.  
Bronze. National Palace  
Museum, Taipei, Taiwan,  
Republic of China

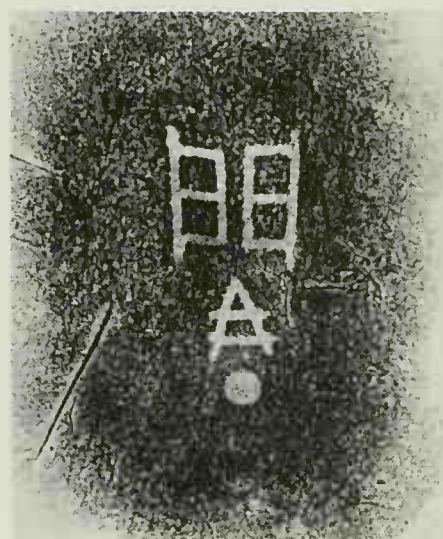
On each side of the upper decorative band of this *kuei* (see illustration) appears a small, frontal *t'ao-t'ieh* mask, flanked by two pairs of birds in low relief. Below is a wide band of bosses in a diamond-patterned grid. The joint marks are masked by high flanges, between which, on each side of the foot, are two confronted dragons (elephants according to the catalogue of the National Palace Museum). The design of this *kuei* indicates a date of the eleventh century B.C. The cast inscription appears inside the vessel on the bottom. The top character, *men*, the pictograph for door, clearly shows two panels of a door, but probably refers to the name of a clan.



2 A (actual size)



2 B (actual size)



2 C (actual size)



*Shih Sung kuei*. 779 B.C. Bronze. National Central Museum,  
Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China

### 3. Large Seal Script

Chou dynasty

Cast Inscription on a Bronze *Kuei* (*Shih Sung kuei*) in the National  
Central Museum, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China

779 B.C.

Ink rubbing (contemporary)

9¼" x 5¼"

Philadelphia Museum of Art

Sixty-three characters appear on the inside bottom of this bronze *kuei* (*see* illustration), dedicated by Shih Sung, a high court officer of the Chou dynasty. The inscription reads:

During the Chou dynasty, on the *Ting shih* day in the fifth month of the third year of the Yu Emperor's reign [779 B.C.], the Emperor Yu, who at that time was residing in the western capital [Hao-ching], ordered the Court Historian Sung to travel to the State of Su, just outside of Lo-yang, for an official inspection. The Lord of the neighboring fief of Su, together with his highest officials, proceeded to the eastern capital [Lo-yang] to meet this Court Historian. Thereupon the official mission was brought to a successful close. The Lord of Su presented the Emperor's representative with a beautiful jade ornament [*chang*], four fine horses, and a quantity of excellent copper. The Court Historian had the copper cast into this *kuei*, which was then inscribed with the following paean: "May I, Sung, enjoy longevity, never forgetting to give praise and thanks to the Emperor for his enlightened instructions. May my sons and grandsons forever treasure this precious vessel."

*Translation courtesy of the National Palace Museum*

Several other bronze vessels with similar inscriptions, also dedicated by Shih Sung, are known. By the time of the Chou dynasty, Chinese characters had increased in number, and inscriptions, in length. The characters were written in a uniform size; a true script had evolved, later referred to as "large seal script" (*ta-chuan*). According to tradition, large seal script was devised in the ninth century B.C. by Shih Chou, but the evidence of bronze inscriptions shows that it had developed as early as the twelfth century B.C.





3 (actual size)



The "Stone Drum" known as *T'ien ch'e shih*, after the first two characters of the inscription



#### 4. Large Seal Script

Pre-Ch'in period

The Ten "Stone Drums" (*Shih-ku wen*) in Shanghai

8th–3rd century B.C.

Ink rubbings (Ming dynasty), mounted as a handscroll

Height 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ "; widths from 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ " to 22 $\frac{5}{8}$ "

Wango H. C. Weng Collection, New York

The oldest lengthy text engraved on stone can be found on a set of ten stones cut in drum form, generally referred to as the ten "Stone Drums," which have been fondly regarded in China throughout the ages. The text records royal hunting expeditions. Since their discovery in the seventh century A.D. at Paoki (Shensi Province), the Stone Drums have had a varied history, including the loss of Drum number three and moves to many different locations. At the Sung imperial court, owing to the efforts of Emperor Hui-tsung (r. 1100–1125), Drum number three was copied and replaced. It is known that at one time Emperor Hui-tsung housed the Drums at the Imperial University. Later, in about 1113, they were placed in the Pao-ho Palace, and the engravings were inlaid with gold. When the Chin troops captured the Sung capital of Kaifeng in 1126, they removed the stones to Peking, and chiseled away the gold inlay, further damaging the characters. Until recently, the Drums were installed in the hallway of the Academy of Learning in Peking. Now they are in Shanghai.

Traditionally the engravings have been dated into the Chou dynasty, during the reign of the Emperor Hsüan Wang (r. 827–782 B.C.), and the writing attributed to the supposed creator of large seal script, Shih Chou (ninth century B.C.). But scholars have suggested many other datings. It is now generally agreed that the Stone Drums were found in the homeland of the Ch'in state and the texts refer to the ruling clan of Ch'in. Kuo Mo-jo (*Shih-ku wen yen-chiu*, rev. ed., Peking, 1953) and Chang Kuang-yüan (*Hsien Ch'in shih ku ts'un shih k'ao*, Yang-ming Shan, 1966) believe they were engraved in 770 B.C., in the time of Duke Hsiang of Ch'in, a distant ancestor of the Emperor, Shih Huang-ti, the founder of the Ch'in empire.

The writing engraved around the surface of the Drums represents a style in transition from the large seal script of the bronze inscriptions to the small seal script (*hsiao-chuan*), the official writing of the Ch'in empire, which was imposed by the government when it unified the country. Later, the small seal script became more stylized and ordered than the script on the Drums. The calligraphy on the Stone Drums was extolled for its archaic beauty and revered for its survival through the ages by the most famous poets and historians of the T'ang and Sung dynasties (see no. 33). In calligraphic art it stands as the ideal of antiquity.



4 (Drum known as *Wo ch'e shih*, detail)



## 5. Small Seal Script

### A. Ch'in dynasty

Molded Pottery Roof Tile Design

3rd century B.C.

Ink rubbing (probably early 20th century)

Diameter 7" (image)

Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago

### B. Han dynasty

Molded Pottery Roof Tile Design

c. 1st century B.C.

Ink rubbing (contemporary)

Diameter 7" (image)

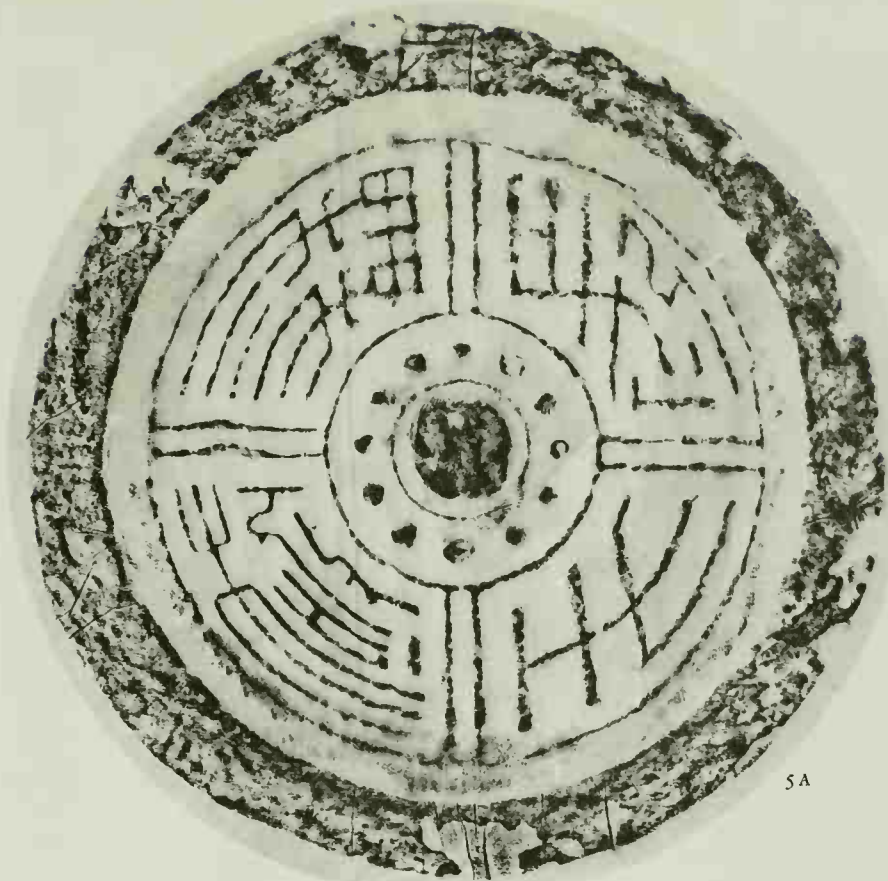
Private collection, Honolulu (ex-collection Mrs. John M. Allison)

Terminal roof tiles with molded designs were made in the late Chou dynasty, but the use of characters as architectural ornaments seems to have developed in the state of Yen in the period between 481 and 222 B.C., and was continued in the Ch'in and Han dynasties. A large number of these tile designs, in stylized small seal script, are known to us today.

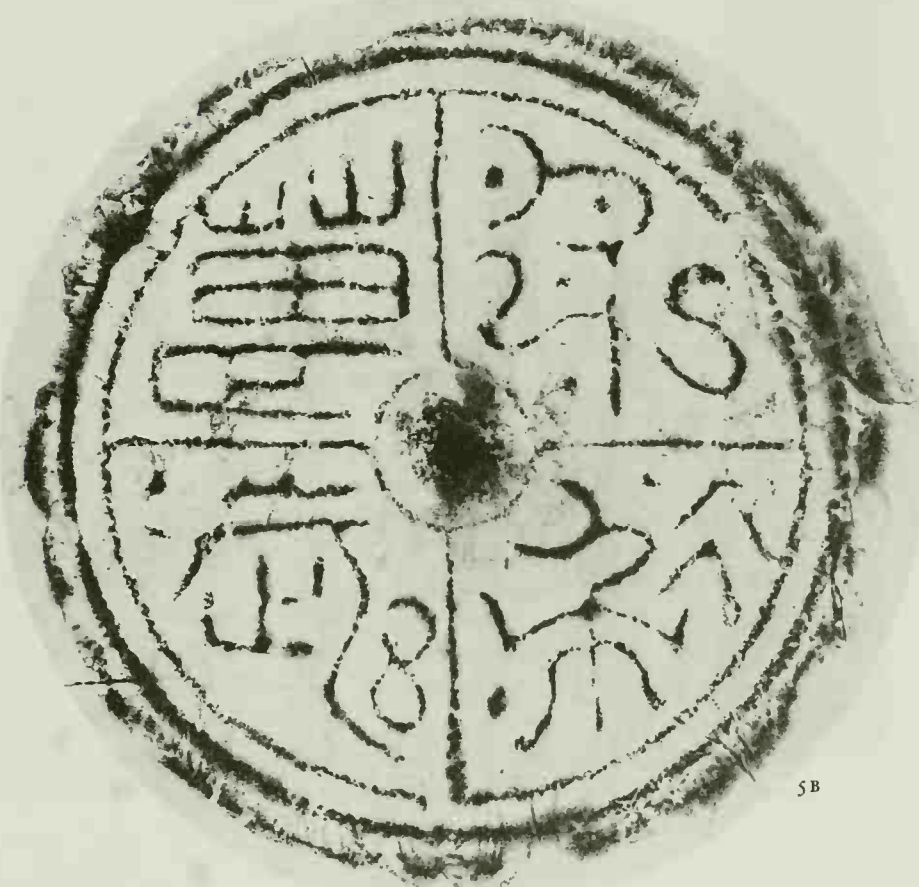
This Ch'in tile is of a type found in the south of Hsien-yang, once a part of Ch'ang-an, where the ancient capital of the Ch'in dynasty was located, and has thus been dated to that period. Its inscription reads, "Long life without end" (*Ch'ang sheng wu chi*).

During the Han dynasty molded tiles came into wider use. The division of the tile end into two or four sections containing characters in relief is typical of the Western Han dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 8). These characters were designed to conform to the circular form, appearing like ropes winding steadily within their spatial limits. The central knob on the tile resembles those on bronze mirrors of the Han dynasty. This Han tile bears the inscription, "A thousand Autumns, ten thousand years [of prosperity]" (*Ch'ien ch'iu wan sui*). According to the *Ch'ang-an chih*, the Western Han Emperor Wu (r. 140–87 B.C.) had a palace called *Wan sui kung*. The last two words on the tile may refer to this palace, but this was also a popular term in Han China connoting good fortune. Such tiles have been found in many parts of China.

The technique of tile decoration in relief is quite different from the later art of the brush. However, no matter how it was executed, Chinese writing never was far removed from its pictorial origins.



5A



5B

## 6. Official Script

Han dynasty

Four Wooden Tablets from Chü-yen (Kansu Province)

1st century B.C. (one dated 42 B.C.)

Black pigment on wood

Lengths from 7½" to 9½"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

Before paper was invented in China, materials used for writing included fabrics of silk (see Noel Barnard, *Scientific Examination of an Ancient Chinese Document as a Prelude to Decipherment, Translation, and Historical Assessment — The Ch'u Silk Manuscript* [Monographs on Far Eastern History 4], Canberra, 1971) and other fibers, and wooden and bamboo tablets, which were tied together in sets. The earliest of these tablets were found in Changsha (Hunan Province), south of the Yangtze River, and may be dated in the late Chou dynasty. Even after the invention of paper (traditionally dated A.D. 105), the custom of writing on tablets continued into the sixth century due to the limited production of paper until about that time. Written characters appear on funerary pottery and lacquerware, but they date no earlier than the second century A.D.

These four tablets come from the site of Chü-yen, located to the northeast of Tun-huang (Kansu Province), which was under Chinese domination during the Han dynasty. The site of Chü-yen was uncovered in 1930, and many wooden tablets bearing written inscriptions were found. Also excavated there was a complete brush (a replica of which is in the East Asian Library, Columbia University, New York). The most comprehensive study of these discoveries was published by Lao Kan (*Chü-yen Han-chien k'ao-shih*, 6 vols., Chungking, 1943-44). He examined more than ten thousand wooden tablets and grouped them into five categories. Most of the writings are official documents — government records, accounts, deeds, census and revenue records, etc. — and thus this style was called "official" or "clerical" script.

The written vocabulary has increased greatly. These writings were not conceived of as art; they are extremely simplified and have completely lost the pictographic characteristics, reaching a stage of pure abstraction. Here the horizontal lines go to the right as stressed feature strokes, giving the writing a natural sense of design. In a composition, these strokes convey rhythm and contribute a lively quality.

By the middle of the first century B.C., when these tablets were written, the tools of writing were becoming refined. An awareness of the softness of the brush and of the quality of the ink is newly evident. The art of handwriting grew out of the lacquer brushwork used in the applied arts, and developed fully in the following century.





6 (tablet at left is also inscribed with five characters on the reverse)

## 7. Official Script

Han dynasty

"Stele of Shih Ch'en" (*Shih Ch'en pei*) at the Confucian Temple  
in Ch'ü-fu (Shantung Province)

A.D. 169

Ink rubbings (17th century), bound in album form

10 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 5 $\frac{5}{8}$ " (each leaf)

Wango H. C. Weng Collection, New York

Carved on the face of this stele, measuring 84 by 40 inches, is a memorial dedicated to the Emperor by Minister Shih Ch'en recording a ceremony at the Confucian Temple. The reverse bears a text describing the splendor of the ceremony. For a long time this stele has been regarded as one of the finest classical models of the official style. The texts have been recorded in *Chin shih ts'ui-pien*, edited by Wang Ch'ang (Shanghai, 1805). The size of the characters and the space between them vary from front to back because of the difference in the number of characters on each side. The writing, however, obviously was produced by one hand, although the artist is unknown.

During the period from the Ch'in dynasty to the Later Han dynasty, the official script fully developed its own features, although within this script there were still certain variations. The purest form was sometimes referred to as *pa-fen* ("eight-tenths"). The significance of this is conjectural: it may mean that eight-tenths of the script was distinctive, the remaining two-tenths being still in the manner of seal script; or that the two stressed feature strokes were like the character *pa* 八; or that this script was composed within eight-tenths of a square (a rectangle). *Pa-fen* is used to refer to the "classical" style of official script, of which the best examples date from the second and third centuries A.D. In the Later Han dynasty, Confucianism was highly influential, penetrating every sphere of life. The official script properly represented its civilized spirit, and it became the symbol of the Confucian gentleman.

The many variations in the quality of line are attributable to the composition and use of the resilient brush. The strokes are interlocked with method and the structure is balanced, the appearance is formal, the mood earnest, and the spirit austere. It was this expressive quality, achieved through a knowing appreciation of the relationship of brush and paper, that established the dominance of the brushstroke in calligraphy.

建寧二年三月  
癸卯朔七日己  
酉  
書札臣晨長

史臣謙頓首  
願  
尚書臣晨頓首



## 8. Regular Script

Three Kingdoms period (Wei dynasty)

“Proclamation” (*Hsüan shih piao*) and “Reply” (*Huan shih t'ieh*)

Chung Yao (A.D. 151–230)

A.D. 221

Ink rubbing (probably 18th century)

11" x 13<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>"

Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago

Chung Yao's other name was Yüan-ch'ang. He was a native of Ying-ch'uan (Honan Province). During the early years of the Wei dynasty, he served as Premier. His last official post, assumed in 227, was that of Grand Tutor.

These writings were engraved during the reign of the Sung Emperor T'ai-tsung, in a collection called *Ch'un hua ko t'ieh*, completed in 992. It was the first large group of choice examples by famous masters of previous dynasties engraved as a collection and reproduced as rubbings, which served as models for students of calligraphy. Many more copies were made after the first edition.

During the Wei dynasty, the regular script (*chen-shu*) had begun to evolve from the official script, for which Chung Yao was at first noted. His regular script developed later, and he became generally regarded as the first and finest master of this style. He preferred to work on a small scale, the art of calligraphy having begun in a clear and intimate manner. His style is lofty, plain, pure, and concise.

Wang Hsi-chih (nos. 9, 10A–D), the famous calligrapher of the fourth century, admired him greatly. Some Sung scholars suspected that the handwritten version of Chung Yao's “Proclamation” had been a traced copy by Wang Hsi-chih. It is also possible that the “Reply” may have been copied by T'ang artists. These texts are two of the few extant examples of the style of writing by Chung Yao.

Juan Yüan (1764–1849), using the traditional division of the schools of painting as a model, classified calligraphic art into two schools. According to his code, the Southern school follows the tradition of Chung Yao and Wang Hsi-chih, who were masters of manuscript and letter forms, exploring the more sophisticated movement of the soft brush. The Northern school includes those masters who wrote in the style of the steles engraved in the Northern dynasties. They worked in firm, angular lines in the tradition of the rustic stone-cut inscriptions.

繇自昨跡還示知憂虞復深遂積  
疾苦何迺爾耶蓋張樂於洞庭之野  
鳥值而高翔魚聞而深潛豈繇馨之  
響雲英之奏非耶此所愛有殊所樂  
迺異若能審已而恕物則常無所結

## 9. Cursive Script

Chin dynasty

"On the Seventeenth" (*Shih-ch'i t'ieh*)

Wang Hsi-chih (303-379)

Ink rubbings (13th century), bound in album form

9½" x 5" (each leaf)

Wang H. C. Weng Collection, New York

Wang Hsi-chih, also named I-shao, came from the province of Shantung. His father, Wang Tao (276-339), a Prime Minister, was also an outstanding calligrapher, as were his brothers and cousins. Eleven generations of the Wang family were highly regarded as calligraphers, but Wang Hsi-chih was the most celebrated one of all. He started practicing this art at an early age, and mastered many styles, especially the regular, running, and cursive scripts. His creative style became the most influential of any artist's throughout the history of Chinese calligraphy.

The T'ang Emperor T'ai-tsung (no. 13) encouraged the systematic pursuit of the classical art of calligraphy. He was an enthusiastic admirer of Wang Hsi-chih, whose works in all styles—no less than 2,200—were collected in his palace. The artist-scholars Yü Shih-nan (no. 106) and Ch'u Sui-liang (no. 108) authenticated them and acted as curators for his collection. T'ai-tsung engaged master artists to make traced copies of some of the best works of the Wang family, and had them meticulously mounted in handscroll form. Many of these copies have survived to our day, while the original works have been lost. Emperor T'ai-tsung commented:

Every student of calligraphy must realize the wonder and the accomplishment of [Wang] Hsi-chih. The best example of his regular style is "About Yo I" [no. 10A], the best of his running style is the "Orchid Pavilion Preface" [no. 10B], and the best in cursive style is "On the Seventeenth." In his writing there is not one line, not one dot that is frozen. This is the *Tao* of calligraphy.

This rubbing reproduces part of a collection of letters by Wang Hsi-chih, called by the first two characters of the first letter, "On the Seventeenth" (not to be misinterpreted as the number of letters in this set). When the original manuscript was assembled by T'ai-tsung, the collection consisted of twenty-three letters written by Wang Hsi-chih. T'ai-tsung had them copied by the finest artists of his time. On the last page was written the large character *ch'ih* (see illustration), signifying the approval of the Emperor; beneath it, the text reads: "Traced by Chieh Wu-wei of the Hung-wen Academy, found to be without a mistake by Ch'u Sui-liang."

This letter was once more engraved in 1109 as part of a collection (*Ta-kuan t'ieh: T'ai-ch'ing-lou hsü t'ieh*) sponsored by the Sung Emperor Hui-tsung (r. 1100-1125). At the time of the Sung imperial edition, the collection included twenty-nine letters by Wang Hsi-chih. According to the connoisseur and calligrapher Weng T'ung-ho (1830-1904), this rubbing belongs to an edition engraved in the Southern Sung dynasty (thirteenth century). It had been in the collection of Hsiang Yüan-pien (1525-1590). Today there are only three sets of Sung rubbings known to us. This set, lacking sixteen lines, is referred to by connoisseurs as the "set missing sixteen lines."

Chang Yen-yüan in *Li tai ming hua chi*, dated 847, stated that the set of "On the Seventeenth" contains the best example of cursive script written by Wang Hsi-chih; this became the revered classical model for cursive script. In the T'ang dynasty, the great master calligraphers, such as Sun Kuo-t'ing, the Priest Chih-yung, Emperor T'ai-tsung, and others, developed their styles after the art of Wang Hsi-chih.



The development of cursive script (*ts'ao-shu*) is attributed to Chang Chih (c. A.D. 200) in the Later Han dynasty. It is a form of shorthand writing. Shortcuts are taken in the number of the strokes in regular script characters, which become abbreviated into curves and dots. Certain principles govern these abbreviations, but the great masters who set the standards for the script preferred to invent their own styles, and it is often difficult to decipher their writing.

The beauty of this script lies in the movement of the lines. Here the penmanship supercedes the literary content, for the action and manner of turning the brush determine the quality of the calligraphy. The art of calligraphy thus involves a pictorial performance. The great philosopher of the Southern Sung dynasty, Chu Hsi (1130–1200), spoke of this writing:

I am meditating before “On the Seventeenth” of Wang Hsi-chih, realizing how easily and fluidly his brush moved. His air is majestic. He was never bound by rules, nor did he try to rebel against the rules. Everything came from within naturally. Most calligraphers admire the beauty of his writing, but do not know why it is beautiful.



9 (last leaf with large character *ch'ih*)



9 (first leaf)

## 10. Regular and Running Scripts

Chin, Liang, and T'ang dynasties

"Eight Famous Inscriptions"

Wang Hsi-chih (303-379), Wang Hsien-chih (344-386), an artist of the 6th century, Yü Shih-nan (558-638), and Ch'u Sui-liang (596-658)

Ink rubbings (before 1049), bound in album form

Wango H. C. Weng Collection, New York

Each of these eight inscriptions is among the most famous of all those preserved as stone engravings. They have been discussed for centuries by connoisseurs, and their genealogies are well recorded in the annals of calligraphy. With great reverence, they were copied by nearly every student of calligraphy. The eight separate rubbings, now mounted in one album, were assembled by Hsiang Yüan-pien (1525-1590). At the end of the eight inscriptions, Hsiang wrote: "In the year 1577, Autumn, [I] bought [these inscriptions] from Mr. Ch'ien of the Wu region [Suchow]. [I] paid eighty ounces of silver with the bonus of a Han tripod. Remounted in 1578, and stored in T'ien-lai-ko [Hsiang's study]." All of the rubbings were taken from rare T'ang engravings, and they were made before 1049. The rubbings were recorded in the catalogue of Emperor Hui-tsung's collection (*Hsüan-ho shu p'u*) in 1120, and bear the imperial seals of the Southern Sung, and of the Yüan Emperor Wen-tsung (r. 1328-1332). There is a colophon by K'o Chiu-ssu (1312-1365), as well as several by Weng T'ung-ho (1830-1904), the great-grandfather of the present owner. They have also been in the collections of Hsiang Yüan-pien, An Ch'i (1638-1743), Wang Shu (1668-1743), and others.

### A. Regular Script

Chin dynasty

"About Yo I" (*Yo I lun*)

Wang Hsi-chih (303-379)

348

9 $\frac{1}{16}$ " x 3 $\frac{13}{16}$ "

This writing by Wang Hsi-chih (*see* no. 9), dated 348, was one of the well-known versions trace copied by Chu I and Hsü Seng-ch'üan of the Liang dynasty. Their names were engraved above the dating at the end of the inscription. To quote Huang T'ing-chien (no. 21): "The writing of *Yo I lun* is mature and firm; its [deliberate] awkwardness shows not a drop of the commonplace. . . ."

### B. Running Script

Chin dynasty

"Orchid Pavilion Preface" (*Lan-t'ing hsü*)

Wang Hsi-chih (303-379)

353

9 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 3 $\frac{1}{16}$ "

*Lan-t'ing hsü* by Wang Hsi-chih has a long and almost legendary history of scholarship to its credit—on the original handwriting, copied handwritten versions, and the stone engravings. The original handwriting, dated 353, was considered by Wang Hsi-chih himself as his best work in the running script (*hsing-shu*). Several handwritten copies from the seventh century made at Emperor T'ai-tsung's court, and several versions of the stone engravings cut at the same time have survived. Among the latter, the best edition was engraved in Ting-wu (Ting-chou). Ou-yang Hsün (557-641) is mentioned





IOA



IOB



IOC

as having made the traced copy. During the Sung dynasty, most of these engraved stones were lost or badly damaged. There has been much discussion about the three oldest versions of the T'ang ink rubbings, which were guarded as treasures by collectors. Many more editions were copied in later periods from the T'ang engravings.

### c. Regular Script

Chin dynasty

"Stele of Ts'ao O" (*Ts'ao O pei*)

Wang Hsi-chih (303-379)

7 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

The original stele of the Later Han dynasty was dedicated to a filial maiden Ts'ao O, who jumped into a river to save her father. The writing is well known, although the stele has been lost; however, more than one copy from the Chin dynasty is still extant. No artist's signature is given, but for a long time it has been attributed to, and accepted as a work by, Wang Hsi-chih. The style here is identical to that of *Yo I lun* (A).



#### D. Regular Script

Chin dynasty

Taoist Scripture (*Huang t'ing ching*; fragment)

Attributed to Wang Hsi-chih (303-379)

8½" x 8¾"

There has been much debate on the original handwriting of this work, because the Taoist text was first composed in the year 364, but the writing is dated 356. However, the attribution to Wang Hsi-chih began as early as the famous T'ang poet Li Po (699-762). On the other hand, Chang Huai-kuan, also active in the early eighth century, believed it was written by someone close to Wang Hsi-chih but after his death.

#### E. Regular Script

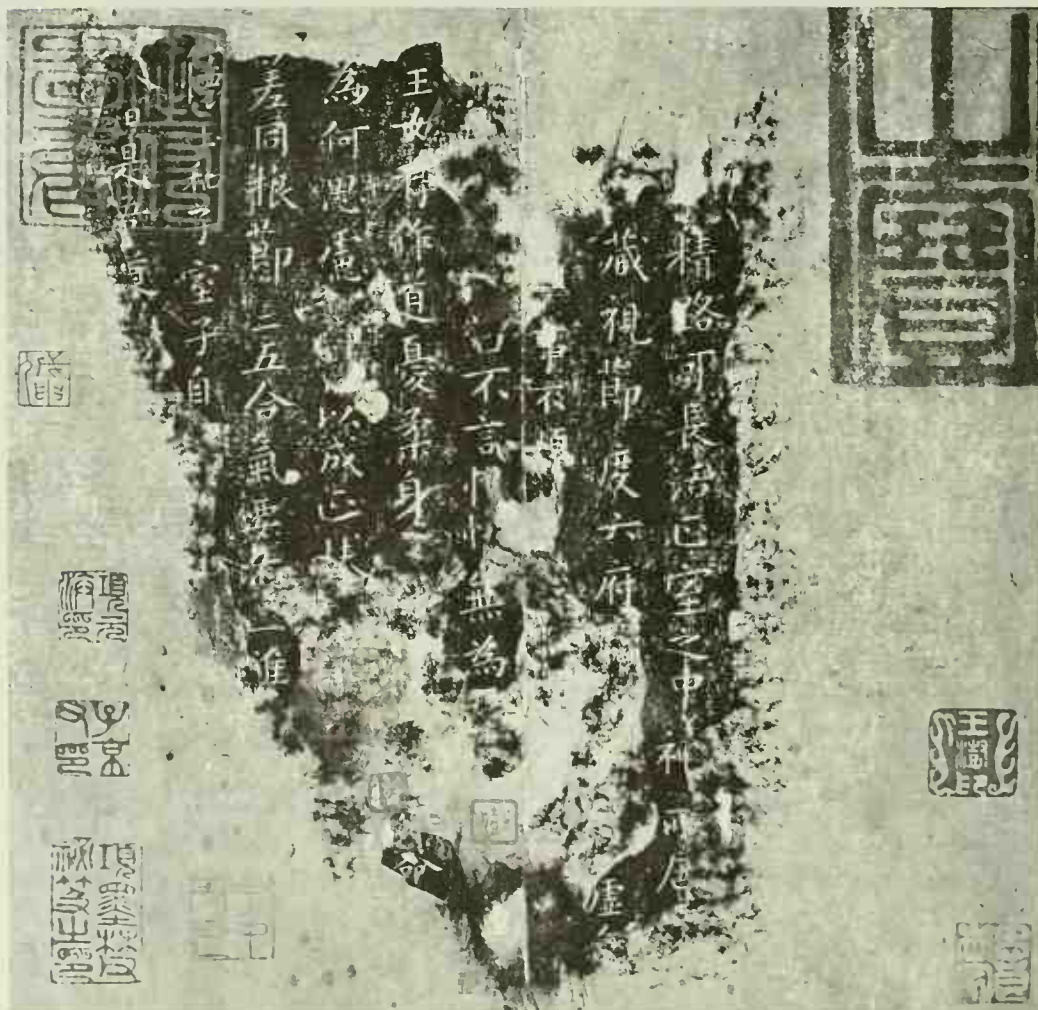
Chin dynasty

"Prose-Poem to the Goddess Lo" (*Lo shen fu*; fragment)

Wang Hsien-chih (344-386)

8⅞" x 3⅝"

A writing of *Lo shen fu* was attributed to Wang Hsi-chih, but Liu Kung-ch'üan (778-865) in 825 identified it as by Wang Hsien-chih, saying that the latter was recorded as having loved the poem and having written many versions of it during his lifetime. This version is referred to by connoisseurs as the "thirteen lines edition," because it is



a fragment with only thirteen lines remaining. It shows a certain casualness, and is not as compact as the writing of Wang Hsi-chih. Chao Meng-fu (nos. 30, 31) said of this writing: "Spirited and untrammelled, the tonality flows in motion." As one becomes accustomed to looking at "white writings," one can actually begin to see the tonality of the ink in the engraved lines.

Wang Hsien-chih, also known as Tzu-ching, was the seventh and youngest son of Wang Hsi-chih, who admitted that he was the best calligrapher among his sons. He served as Secretary General of the court. His second wife was a princess, and his daughter became the Empress of the Chin Emperor An Ti (r. 399-417). Wang Hsien-chih was a dedicated calligrapher, second only to his father; his style reflects the family tradition.

#### F. Regular Script

Liang dynasty

"About Yo I" (*Yo I lun*)

6th century

8 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ "

This is another version of *Yo I lun* (see A). At the court of T'ai-tsung in the seventh century, six versions were copied by six different artists, and then engraved on stones. This version is one of the T'ang engravings. The lines are slightly thicker than those in the engraving made during the Liang dynasty (A).



IOE



IOF



## c. Regular Script

T'ang dynasty

"A Preface on Destroying Evil" (*P'o hsieh lun hsü*)

Yü Shih-nan (558-638)

9 1/8" x 3 5/8" (each)

Yü Shih-nan came from Chekiang Province. His official posts were Senior Lord of the Imperial Banquet and Director of the Imperial Library. He was also a Calligrapher-Minister in the court of T'ai-tsung. The Emperor appreciated his personality and praised him as one who possessed "five virtues": faithfulness to the court, loyalty to his friends, wide scholarly interests, elegance in literary composition, and excellence in calligraphy. He was one of the famous Eighteen Scholar-Ministers under T'ai-tsung. He studied the art of calligraphy with the Priest Chih-yung (active about the later half of the sixth century), who was a descendant of Wang Hsi-chih and an outstanding calligrapher.

*P'o hsieh lun hsü* was written in his famous regular style. It preserves the formality of Wang Hsi-chih, but has a simple earnestness, which was quite his own. Some described his writing as suggestive of a person slowly pacing on a high terrace who had long detached himself from the world.





## h. Regular Script

T'ang dynasty

"Scripture on Esoteric Credentials" (*Yin fu ching*)

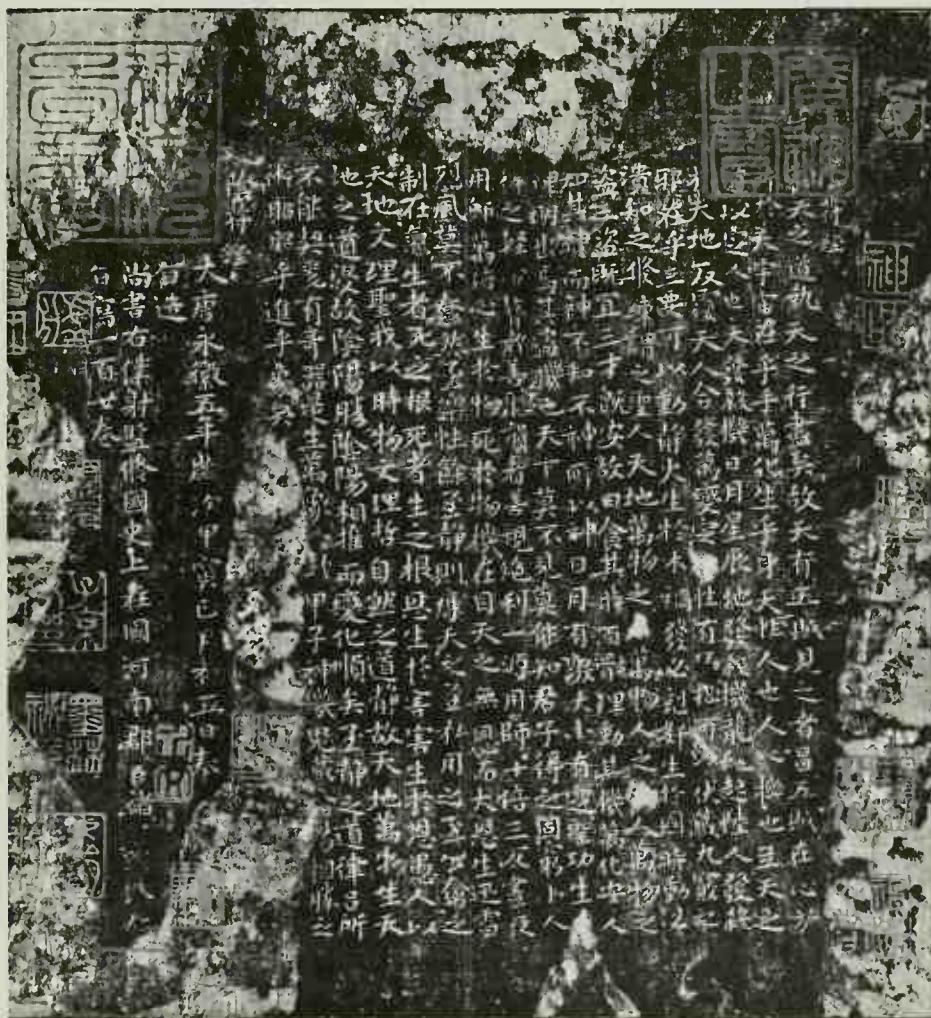
Ch'u Sui-liang (596-658)

654

8 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ "

*Yin fu ching* is the text of a Taoist scripture created under imperial auspices during the time of T'ai-tsung. This writing is dated 654. Ch'u Sui-liang wrote this manuscript of 120 Chinese *chüan* (chapters) in both regular and cursive script. Today only one chapter of each survives. His characters, not bigger than a grain of corn, are exquisite examples of his small regular style.

Ch'u Sui-liang, a native of Honan Province, was another Scholar-Minister serving under Emperor T'ai-tsung. After Yü Shih-nan (G) died, T'ai-tsung lamented that he had no one with whom to talk about the art of calligraphy. Premier Wei Cheng (580-643) introduced Ch'u Sui-liang to the imperial court. The artist immediately won the confidence of the Emperor, who from then on relied on him in matters regarding the imperial art collection. Ch'u Sui-liang became the acknowledged expert on Wang Hsi-chih; he certified the authenticity of his work, directed the traced copies made at court, and did a number of traced copies himself. These were the finest reproductions of Wang Hsi-chih's calligraphy, including both handwriting and stone engravings.



## II. Regular Script

Northern Wei dynasty

"Stele of Shih-chia" (*Shih-chia hsiang*), in the Ku-yang cave at Lung-men (Honan Province)

c. 500

Ink rubbing (probably early 20th century)

35<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" x 15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>"

Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago

This inscribed stele, located on the north wall, upper tier, second niche of the Ku-yang cave in Lung-men (Honan Province), records the erection of a statue of Sakyamuni donated by Wei Ling-ts'ang and Hsüeh Fa-shao. It bears no date, but adjacent to it is an image by Yang Ta-yen with an inscription dated 500–503. The writing style of both inscriptions is similar and very probably they are by the same hand. This is considered one of the twenty best inscriptions from the Lung-men caves, called *Lung-men erh-shih p'in*.

Unusual characters appear in the inscription indicating the influence of foreign tribes during the Northern dynasties. The regular script was the most popular style in the Northern Wei dynasty. Its robust outlook is complemented by this script. Significantly, one feels the calligrapher yielding to the engraver. The engraving does not have the resilient brush movement as shown on the Han steles. Chiseled metal-like lines predominate, the strokes are sharp, and their turns and folds are angular. The primitive quality may or may not have been intentional, but the new charm of the Northern steles is in their earthiness and their strength. The structure of each character is architectural, and corresponds to the contemporary sculpture, at once generous and naive, with a monumental wholesomeness, particularly noticeable here. This straightforwardness richly inspired the artists of later periods. The tradition, as Juan Yüan classified it, is typical of the Northern school.



夫靈跡誕靈

11 (detail, actual size)

夫靈跡誕靈必表光大之迹玄切既敷各樹希世之作自雙  
林改照大千佛綴映之悲慧日昏暉哈生街道慕之應是  
應真悼三乘之靡憑遂以刊像爰暨下代茲容廉作  
魏靈藏魏靈藏河東薛法紹二人等永懷光東昭之資開恩  
釋迦像額乾祚興通方朝賞額藏等提三槐於孤峰秀九謀於華  
薛去紹范芳寶無繁瑞擁獨茂合朝榮祐福深并壽命終之後飛  
蓬聖神颺六通智周三達曠世所生元身眷屬捨百郭則  
鵬擊龍花悟無生則靈昇道樹五道群生成同斯慶  
隆渾縣功曹魏靈藏



## 12. Regular Script

Six Dynasties period

Fragment of a Sutra, from Tun-huang (Kansu Province)

6th–7th century

Handscroll, ink on paper

10 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 55 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

Nelson Gallery–Atkins Museum, Kansas City

The source of the text of this fragment is unknown. The text concerns a medical visitor at an unknown kingdom. On the reverse of this sutra are a few interesting sketches (*see Handbook*, Nelson Gallery–Atkins Museum, Kansas City, 1959, p. 195), which are later in date, perhaps from the early tenth century (late T'ang dynasty). Translations of Buddhist sutras into Chinese greatly increased in number from the second century to the T'ang dynasty. A great many professional but anonymous writers copied these translations, spreading the teachings of Buddhism throughout China.

Although on occasion sutra writing was done in running script, most of the texts are written in regular script. This sixth-century writing still shows a stylistic kinship with the official script of the Han dynasty. However, the Han script used the concealed tip at the beginning of a stroke, allowing the tip to be exposed at the end of the horizontal sweep (like the feature stroke of the official style; *see nos. 6, 7*), while in sutra writing the pointed tip was exposed at the beginning of a stroke (which almost resembles the head of a nail). The structure of the character still stresses the horizontal, each stroke curving slightly. These characteristics marked all of the early sutra writing of the Six Dynasties. Some of these writings are awkward, some elegant, some are compact, and some symmetrical. They are as unusual and refreshing as the translated literature itself. Nevertheless, sutra writing does have a collective character very much its own, referred to as the "sutra style" (*hsüeh-ching-t'i*).

A specially made brush is associated with sutra writing, which seems to have been used as early as the fifth century. It survived into the T'ang dynasty, and is still being manufactured in Nara in Japan. It is called a "sutra-writing brush," has a shorter and thicker tuft than the more common brushes, and is particularly suited to stressing the modulated lines.

Sutra writing was not widely known until the rediscovery of the Buddhist center of Tun-huang early in this century, when a great cache of Buddhist manuscripts was found there. It threw much light on Buddhist art and literature, but yielded very little information about the artists who painted the murals and wrote these beautiful sutras. Stylistically, traces of an influence from a metropolitan center of China may be assumed. The manner of sutra writing changed; in time it adopted the stylistic characteristics of each period.

不顛倒以不倒故知字知義若

倒者真知如是常樂我淨時諸比

世尊如佛所說離四倒者則得了矣 樂字

淨若已了知常樂我淨何故不住一切半劫

教導我等令離四倒而見放捨欲入涅槃如來

若見願念恭敬我當至心頂受猶係如來若入

於涅槃者我等云何與是毒身同共心住猶於梵

行我等不當隨佛世尊入於涅槃余時佛告諸比

丘言汝等不應住如是語我今所有无上正法

悉以付囑摩訶迦葉是迦葉者當念汝等在

大依心猶如如來為諸眾生住依心處摩訶迦

葉無退如是當為汝等住依心處譬如大王

多所統領若遊巡時悉以國事付囑大臣如

未久亦所有正法悉以付囑摩訶迦葉汝等

當知先所聽集无常苦想非是真實譬如

春時有諸人等在大池浴乘船遊戲失琉璃寶

匣深水中是時諸人悉共入水求覓是寶競

捉凡石草木沙礫各目謂得琉璃珠歡喜

持出乃知非真是時寶珠猶在水中以珠力

出水皆澄清於是大眾乃見寶珠故在水下

猶如仰觀虛空月形是時眾中有一智人以

方便力安徐入水即便得珠汝等比丘不應

### 13. Cursive Script

T'ang and Sung(?) dynasties

"Writing on a Screen—Conversations between Rulers and Ministers of the Past" (*T'ang Wen-huang* [*T'ai-tsung*] *Yü-shu p'ing-feng i'ieh*)

Emperor T'ai-tsung (b. 598, r. 626–649)

640

Handscroll, ink on paper (Sung[?] written copy), and mounted ink rubbing (perhaps 17th century)

10 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 14' 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

Appended to this scroll are twenty-one colophons, including several by famous names from the tenth century on, and numerous seals (*see Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.*, New York, 1962, pp. 49–50).

T'ai-tsung was the second Emperor of the T'ang dynasty. As a young man, he had gone to battle to help his father establish the T'ang empire. One of the most able and beloved rulers in Chinese history, T'ai-tsung greatly advanced Chinese culture. He was a connoisseur of art and a conscientious sponsor of the art of calligraphy (*see* no. 9), and wrote several treatises on its aesthetics and techniques.

The writing by T'ai-tsung dates from 640. It was recorded in an encyclopedia of governmental affairs of the T'ang dynasty (*T'ang hui-yao*) and was mentioned in 1120 in the catalogue of Emperor Hui-tsung's collection (*Hsüan-ho shu p'u*). In 1182, Chu K'uan-fu copied the handwriting (which was last recorded in 1194); his copy was engraved in 1204.

While the date of the handwritten version on this scroll is in doubt, the script of the ink rubbing is a fine example of the early cursive style, clearly showing the influence of Wang Hsi-chih (no. 9). It appears somewhat leaner than that in other rubbings of calligraphy attributed to T'ai-tsung, perhaps because it was copied by a Sung artist and then engraved. However, the movement is fluid and the writing is of fine quality.

The handwritten version, not a slavish copy of the engraving, suggests the work of an accomplished artist. It shows how engravings helped to provide a continuity in the development of Chinese calligraphic art, serving as important models for copying and training. The making of rubbings was promoted by Emperor T'ai-tsung, and continued to be popular until photographic reproduction was introduced in Asia. The ancient art of rubbing, whether from stone or wood engravings, has been treasured by Chinese connoisseurs for its historical significance as well as for its beauty. A special field of study, *chin-shih-hsüeh* ("studies of bronze inscriptions and stone inscriptions"), developed in China in the eleventh century.



以有特飛人  
通四古字以不二格以  
密物有以以以以  
漢文帝時不亦中唐嘉  
八得兒部通居年侯  
有急慢祀知有以以  
堂中移五以富其以  
主即唐之禮不亦以  
帝四其勿云其如以  
漢生帝其以中其其  
上壽王以系系其其  
其其以東其其其其  
以散及以以以以  
其其其其其其其其  
其其其其其其其其  
其其其其其其其其  
其其其其其其其其

13 (written copy, detail)

以有特飛人  
通四古字以不二格以  
密物有以以以以  
漢文帝時不亦中唐嘉  
八得兒部通居年侯  
有急慢祀知有以以  
堂中移五以富其以  
主即唐之禮不亦以  
帝四其勿云其如以  
漢生帝其以中其其  
上壽王以系系其其  
其其以東其其其其  
以散及以以以以  
其其其其其其其其  
其其其其其其其其  
其其其其其其其其  
其其其其其其其其  
其其其其其其其其

13 (rubbing, detail)

## 14. Official Script

T'ang dynasty

“‘Canon of Filial Piety,’ with Imperial Comments” (*Yü shu Hsiao ching*)

Emperor Ming-huang (Hsüan-tsung; 685–762, r. 712–755)

745

Ink rubbing (probably early 20th century; one of four sections),  
mounted as a hanging scroll

9' 10" x 46½"

Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago

The Crown Prince Heng (later Emperor Su-tsung) wrote the title: “His Majesty composed and wrote the preface, comments, and the calligraphy.” Among those present and signing their names were his two Prime Ministers and other high officials in his court. However, several names seem to have been added a number of years later. The complete text with the imperial comments is recorded in *Chin shih ts'ui-pien*, compiled by Wang Ch'ang in 1805 (*chüan* 84). When the writing was engraved on four steles, a special terrace was built to display them in Ch'ang-an. Now they are located at the Pei-lin in Sian (Shensi Province). The surface of the hard stone is unusually smooth, and the engravings have been perfectly preserved.

Ming-huang was one of the finest of the Emperor-calligraphers. He is famous for his infatuation with the beautiful consort Yang Kuei-fei, and lost his throne when he was defeated in the revolt led by An Lu-shan in 755. A conscientious patron of the arts, he mastered both the running and the official scripts. In contrast to the angular calligraphy of the Northern dynasties and the bony structure of the Sung dynasty, his style is considerably broader and more weighty, reflecting the sensuous and luxurious court of the mid-T'ang dynasty. A well-known example of his running style, *Chi ling sung* (“Eulogy to a Pied Wagtail”), is in the National Palace Museum, Taipei (see *Shodō zenshū*, vol. 7, Heibonsha, 1957, pls. 92, 93). It is quite different in style from the “Canon of Filial Piety,” but it likewise shows a sumptuousness, which is expressive of Ming-huang's personality.



14 (detail, about two-thirds  
actual size)

14



## 15. Cursive Script

T'ang dynasty

"Fragmentary Stone Copy of 'Essay of a Thousand Characters' "

(*Ch'ien tzu wen tuan pei*)

Attributed to Chang Hsü (act. 713-740)

Ink rubbing (probably early 20th century, one of six sections)

11" x 29½"

Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago

This fragmentary stone engraving has lost its signature and date. There is some doubt as to the attribution, but most scholars agree that it could be by Chang Hsü. A native of Suchow (in present-day Kiangsu Province), Chang Hsü, who served as superintendent of a ministry, was one of the best-known calligraphers of his time. A typical bohemian, he loved wine and did his best work under its influence. When studying the art of calligraphy, he discovered the secret of pace and rhythm while hearing the music of a street band. Watching two peddlers with poles balanced on their shoulders fighting their way along a narrow path and trying to avoid entanglement, and seeing a sword dance by the courtesan, Kung-sun Ta-niang (who also figures in a poem of the T'ang poet Tu Fu), impressed their influence on his brush technique. The T'ang Emperor Wen-tsung (r. 827-840) remarked: "Li Po's poetry, General P'ei Min's sword dance, and Chang Hsü's cursive script are 'Three Wonders of Our Time!'" Another story in the late ninth century text, the *T'ang ch'ao ming hua lu* ("Record of Famous Paintings of the T'ang Dynasty") by Chu Ching-yüan, relates the movements of the human body to the arts of painting and calligraphy:

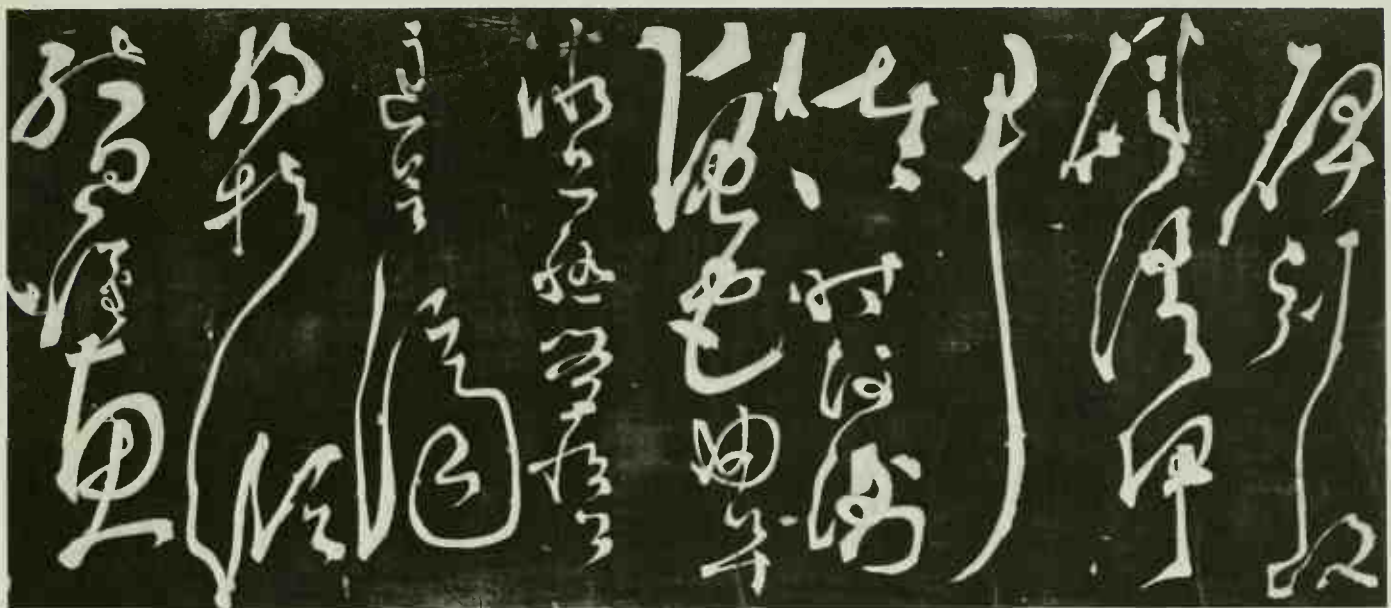
General P'ei Min, after offering [as a gift] silk and gold, invited Wu Tao-tzu [d. 792] to paint a mural. Wu refused the silk and gold saying to the General:

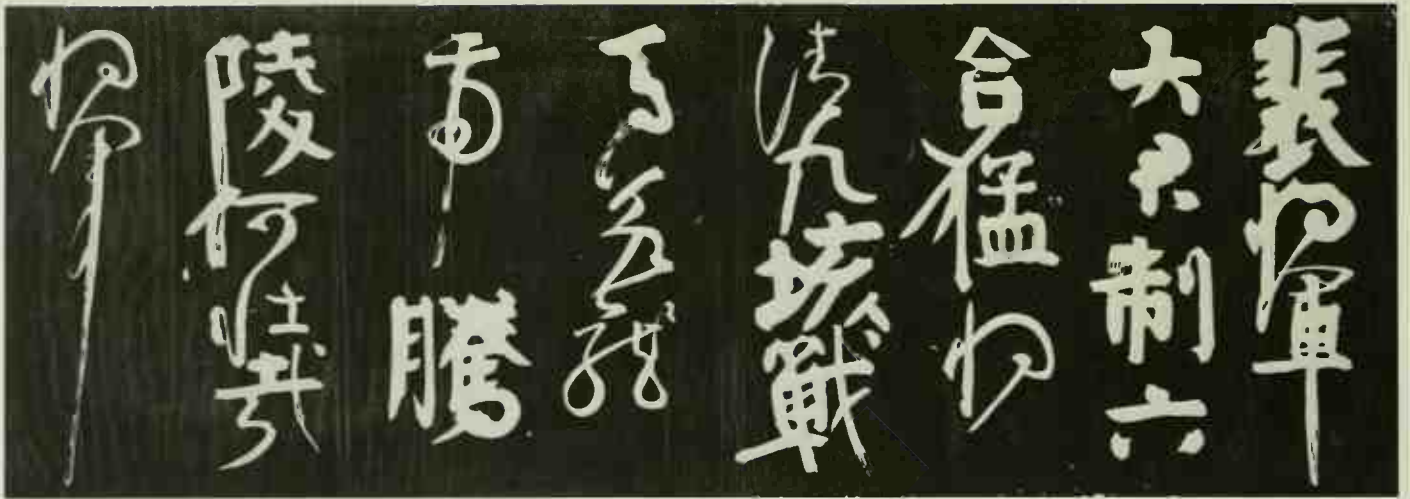
"I have heard about your famous art of the sword. If you perform for me, it would inspire me in the heroic mood, and I, in return, will paint the mural for you."

General P'ei performed a spectacular sword dance. Wu wielded his brush and dashed off a mural in a few hours. Chang Hsü was present and added his cursive writing [to the mural]. All those present exclaimed that these were "Three Wonders" marked in one day.

Chang Hsü's cursive style was referred to as the "delirious script," which was a marked departure from the cursive style of the Han calligrapher Chang Chih and of Wang Hsi-chih (no. 9). Chang Hsü's style shows an extravagant rendering of lines and a rapid execution. One single stroke winds and circles to complete several characters without a break. Indeed, the movement is like that of a dancer handling a sword, which glitters and whirls in the air in musical rhythm. Chang Hsü's movement is unpredictable, sometimes being compared to that of the long-armed gibbon swinging in the trees, at other times to the thunder and lightning crashing in the clouds. As the writer Tung Yu said in 1125 in his book of essays on calligraphy and painting (*Kuang-ch'uan hua pa*):

Chang Hsü's writing is far beyond the form of reality. . . . Yet when the storm is over, and the clouds are calm, the weird and excessive once again recede. Of his movements, not a single one is out of line and every stroke is under his command. This is his greatness.





## 16. Cursive Script

T'ang dynasty

"Farewell to General P'ei" (*Sung P'ei Chiang-chün shu*)

Yen Chen-ch'ing (709-785)

Ink rubbing (probably early 20th century)

13 3/4" x 37"

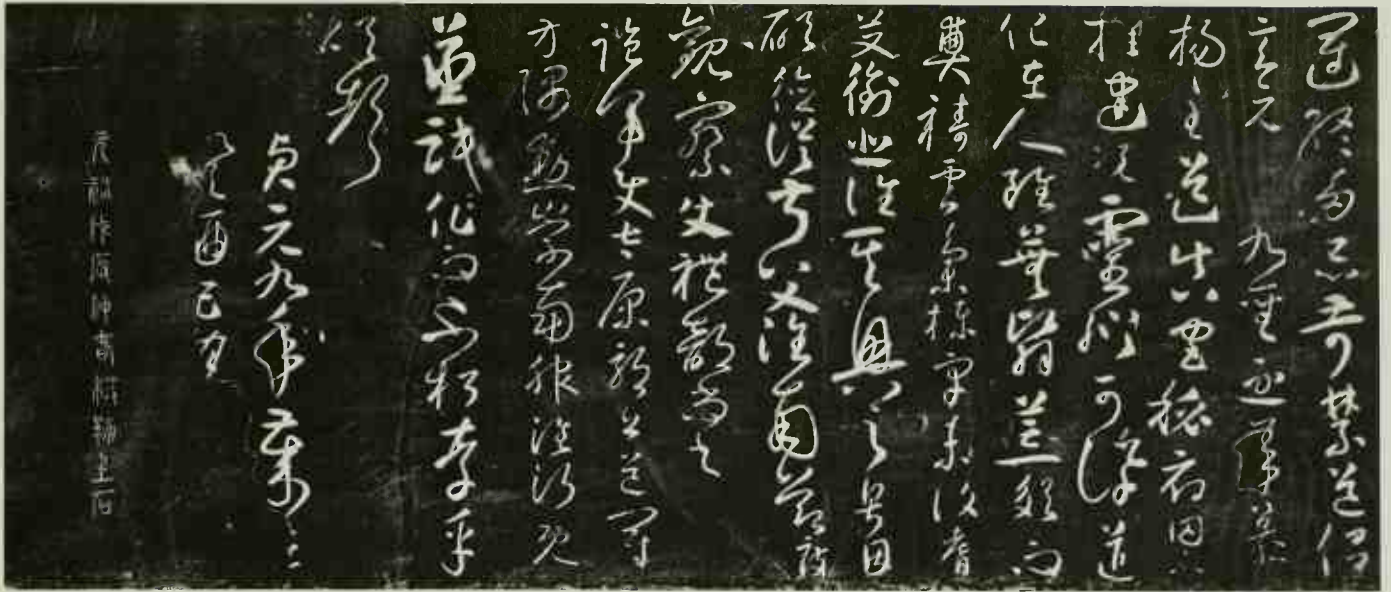
Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago

Yen Chen-ch'ing was one of the finest calligraphers at the court of Ming-huang (Emperor Hsüan-tsung, r. 712-755). He was appointed as Investigation Censor of the Bureau of Administration, and was famous for his honesty and integrity, eventually receiving the title Duke of Lu. During his mid-thirties he began to study the art of calligraphy with Chang Hsü (no. 15). In his treatise, "The Twelve Aspects of Brush-strokes as Taught by Chang Hsü," he also described his own experiences in learning the essence of the art. He quoted the famous saying by Ch'u Sui-liang (no. 10H) that a line should appear like "the imprint of a seal" or "an awl that draws on sand," that is, with every evidence of the brush hidden by concealing the tip. He learned much of this from stone engravings.

Yen Chen-ch'ing was best known for his regular script; he also excelled in the cursive style. Su Shih (1036-1101) admired him above all others, and referred to the quality of his calligraphy as "possessing [honest] awkwardness." It is generally agreed that his calligraphy shows the greatness of his personality: the heroic bearing and an awesomeness like that seen in the figures of temple guardians.

This cursive script was dedicated to a General P'ei, who it has been suggested, might have been a relative of the same General P'ei Min, the master of the sword dance (see no. 15). Here Yen Chen-ch'ing combined his masterful regular and running scripts most effectively. His line moves like a dancing sword, twisting and turning over the surface in rhythmic beat. His dot is compared with a "falling rock," his line moves as "summer clouds," his inward hook is "bending metal," his outward curve is a taut "charging bow," his cross stroke is an "arrow about to be released." He wrote in various styles, but each was always distinctly his own.





17 (detail of lower half)

## 17. Cursive Script

T'ang dynasty

"Holy Mother" (*Sheng mu t'ieh*)

The Monk Huai-su (737-after 798)

793

Ink rubbing (probably early 20th century)

25½" x 50¾"

Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago

The text of the writing was composed in A.D. 343 and dedicated to a provincial goddess. The original handwriting is signed by Huai-su and bears the date 793; the stone engraving is dated 1088.

The Monk Huai-su, whose family name was Ch'ien, was a native of Changsha (Hunan Province). He was a Buddhist monk and a disciple of the great priest Hsüan-tsang. In his later years, he was devoted to the art of calligraphy. The worn brushes he discarded piled up so high that he referred to them as "a tomb of brushes." He had little money to buy paper, and he often used banana leaves for practice work. Once, as he was watching the wind blowing summer clouds, he was enlightened as to the meaning of the art of calligraphy. The poet Li Po and his friends all admired Huai-su's writing. Like Chang Hsü (no. 15), Huai-su was also fond of wine. Under its influence, his brush would fly as in a fury, his strokes were as snakes striking. Sometimes a line travels on for several characters like a length of wire. People used to call his writing the "wild cursive script," which followed the "delirious" manner of Chang Hsü.

In this writing, the lines spring light-footed, the curves are rolling loops. This is one of Huai-su's more disciplined creations. Chang Hsü's cursive script, in comparison, has more confined movement with the tip of the brush turning and folding within a single stroke. Huai-su made use of the seal-script technique: he employed the full, round middle tip of the brush (*see* fig. 9a), guiding the handle rather than folding and modulating the tip. Huai-su has his own sweeping greatness.

## 18. Regular Script

T'ang dynasty

"Sutra of Madhyamagama" (chapter nine)

8th century(?)

Handscroll, ink on paper

10<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" x 18' 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>"

Wango H. C. Weng Collection, New York

This version of one of the sutras translated by the Kabul priest Gautama Samghadeva between A.D. 383(?) and 388(?) was probably written in the eighth century. No stressed feature strokes of the official style are visible here, no bending, swaying, no rhythmic lines. The individual strokes are short and straightforward. The structure is balanced within a true square. A certain austerity betrays the writer who knew the small regular styles of Chung Yao (no. 8) and Wang Hsi-chih (no. 10A, C, D). Although this writing is a rather sober one among the sutra styles, it is not as "bony" as that of the small regular scripts in the south. Its "fleshiness" still has the richness common to the sutra-writing tradition.

有勝天經第八竟

中阿含長壽王品加絺那經第九

第二小玉成誦

我聞如是一時佛遊舍衛國在勝林給孤獨  
園尔時尊者阿那律陀亦在舍衛國住娑羅  
羅巖山中於是尊者阿那律陀過夜平旦著  
衣持鉢入舍衛乞食尊者阿難亦復平旦著  
衣持鉢入舍衛乞食尊者阿那律陀見尊者  
阿難亦行乞食見已語曰賢者阿難當知我  
三衣庶素壞盡賢者今可倩諸比丘為我作  
衣尊者阿難為尊者阿那律陀默然許倩於  
是尊者阿難舍衛乞食訖食訖中後收舉衣  
鉢澡洗手足以尼師檀著於肩上手執戶簫  
遍詣房房見諸比丘便語之曰諸尊今往詣  
娑羅羅巖山中為尊者阿那律陀作衣於



## 19. Regular Script

T'ang dynasty

Sutra: "Admonitions to the Monks" ("The Discipline of the Four Divisions"; chapter four), from Tun-huang (Kansu Province)

Late 8th century

Handscroll, ink on paper

11  $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 34' 7  $\frac{3}{4}$ "

Philadelphia Museum of Art, Given by Miss Alice Boney

The text of this sutra was completed in the present form shortly before the sixth century during the Northern Ch'i dynasty. It then became popular in the north; later, the T'ang Emperor Chung-tsung (r. 684) banned a similar type of Buddhist discipline sutra, the *Shih sung* ("Ten Readings"). This Four Division Discipline then spread to the south, becoming the basis of the Mahayana Vinaya or Lü Tsung School of Buddhism that strictly follows the Discipline. The text outlines rules of behavior, both mental and physical, for the monks to follow. The following excerpts give an idea of the variety of subjects covered in the sutra:

Only the wise man is able to protect and maintain the Buddha Truth. By maintaining the Truth he is able to obtain the three joys—the joy of being born a Deva, the joy of meditation, and the joy of Nirvana.

As a bee, without harming the flower, its color, or scent, flies away, collecting only the honey, even so should mendicants wander in the village. One should not pry into the faults of others, things left done and undone by others, but one's own deeds done and undone.

Mendicants are not allowed to climb the trees although suffering from the Summer heat. This rule is enforced as the result of the mendicants' misbehavior, of their urinating and excreting on top of the trees.

Rules concerning the pagoda:

No one is allowed to sleep inside the pagoda unless assigned as a guard.

No money or other personal belongings are allowed to be stored in the pagoda.

No one is allowed to enter the pagoda wearing shoes made of straw.

No one is allowed to enter the pagoda wearing ornamented boots.

No one is allowed to eat under the pagoda.

No corpse is allowed to be carried by the pagoda.

No corpse is allowed to be buried under the pagoda.

No corpse is allowed to be burned near the pagoda.

*Translation by Nancy Cheng*

Over the text of this sutra, in red ink, are checking marks of the priest who signed the end of the scroll. The last line in red ink reads: "*Yen nien*, tenth month, eighth day, in the Ch'ien-yüan Temple, at Sha-chou [Tun-huang]. [He] checked the text, and approved of it here." The first two words, *Yen nien*, should indicate the reign year of the Emperor at the time it was written, but there is no reign by that name in Chinese official history. It could be a local expression or perhaps the name of a priest.

The regular style of the writing is mixed with that of running script. The strokes are straightforward, angular, and slightly squat, related to those on Northern steles, but there appears a certain sensuousness, indicating a date in the late eighth century.

六者如負重行要少資糧故戒不守戒戒校便得金令七者如園具三寶是至要  
此園道戒心不貳動身果德是收聖共愛八者如滿得聖動道而不捨戒戒心由  
戒離清惠是收聖動道清淨戒能收淨定同宜有戒初德若園備便  
戒於仙道 如過去諸仙及未來者現在諸尊能勝一切更皆於再教戒  
此非諸仙法 此個半證前戒氣之文三世諸如來備尊戒戒戒何得清淨而  
不捨淨戒諸仙同戒得勝文報戒是收聖教一切聖道由戒得教言此是諸仙法  
如教多偏至我列戒是仙法乎正地一切善由戒得長清仙弟子依戒住國戒能離  
淫穢戒戒能離微聚寶聖是收同尊戒律法則明三世諸仙共著教戒之真法  
故 若有身身欲戒於道當再重法此是諸仙教 此係文初九教戒  
仙道同戒得戒也謹持存若謹戒行者不乃在漢後戒得戒云欲得五利當戒戒  
立正法及久住心元極限令安樂進化清方而元國是收勸令再重戒  
公為世尊戒諸結候說七戒經諸縛得解脫已入於恒縣諸獻永滅盡  
此係半七七仙道同戒及略戒為證七仙道同戒諸弟子道三業令微凡  
聖俱得直清淨永盡淫淫縣 再行大仙教 聖賢得戒 弟子三行  
入淨戒淫縣 此係勸善釋教文引七仙道若能同飲七仙弟子若重戒不放  
犯忌能入於淨淫縣一切寶聖共稱贊持戒之行勝業以仙密意傳授令靈  
解脫 再行淨戒時與起於大悲集諸比丘眾與如是教試莫謂我淫縣  
淨行有元教我今說戒經亦善說戒在戒難般淫縣當須世尊 此係半文  
引仙道教初將戒戒後諸台仙使戒世間元仙所難證諸仙言若能戒成生天  
解若我在世無此世乃至仙言我不滿度半月一乘文言仙有二身願身難去仙  
在世若戒戒身身若難戒戒便為漢仙如飲水並更實又大無能二同此戒  
當知持戒行有清聖共讚 此經久住世仙法得勝戒以是屬威故得入於淫縣  
此係明初傳戒法善見云仙法何難戒戒後有五種法令正法久住者此是  
淫大勝三言古至五持律在世三有中國十人遵理五人如法愛為西者此清衆此淫  
罪五者此守律禁戒因此五法而令仙法住世五千年以知持戒因仙法威威  
得入淫縣 若不持戒戒然應有淫喻如日陰時世眾皆聞 此係明初傳戒法  
十誦文此戒學戒因此仙可責乃由戒得仙仙久住世為度海云破戒之人時不放  
其至如戒人亦近如大痴人難收聖果次第後善實非此正聖懷惟我為仙職由分律  
云戒戒比丘有五通種一者自告二者有河三思名依有由臨終生悔五死復受道  
當須得戒如猶半慶尾 和合一受聖如仙之引說 此係初傳戒法初海說者衆  
大利並當坐持禁戒是諸律今出家之要須知持聖實如護身命時若元卿  
是差法元能離元組不能飛若謹持禁戒能清淫淫縣給又云戒如明日月忌  
提經珠戒日若改時僧衆皆迷聞是以應謹戒如仙者道端  
我世戒經衆僧相隨竟我今說戒經所說諸功德施一切眾生 皆共成仙道  
此係明律至曲向功德法謹尊者戒戒已了因此再在大乘前位雖同做三業之  
根性乃是善薩種所作功德廣回施令彼清果共成仙

四分戒本疏卷第四

卷第四 四分戒本疏卷第四

## 20. Regular Script

Five Dynasties period

"Sutra of Samyuktagama" (chapter twenty-five)

10th century

Handscroll, ink on paper

9½" x 17'

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

A line of script coming before the handwritten text of the "Sutra of Samyuktagama" gives its provenance: "The sutra collection of the Kuang-hui Ch'an Buddhist Monastery (*Kuang-hui ch'an yüan*) at Chin-su Mountain, Hai-yen Hsien, Chekiang Province." It entered the Palace collection at the time of the Ch'ien-lung Emperor (Kao-tsung, r. 1736–1795), and was mentioned in the catalogue of the imperial collection (*Pi-tien chu-lin*), compiled in 1744. The previous owner of this sutra was P'u-yi (r. 1908–1912), the last Emperor of the Ch'ing dynasty, whom the Japanese placed on the throne of their puppet state of Manchukuo.

The scroll has many imperial seals of the Ch'ien-lung Emperor and those of Jen-tsung (r. 1796–1820) and P'u-yi. It once had the seals of Su Shih (1036–1101) and Chao Meng-fu (nos. 30, 31), but these have been erased. A colophon at the end of the scroll signed by six officials of the Ch'ien-lung Emperor, including the two calligraphers Liu Yung (no. 91) and Tung Kao (1740–1818), states:

At right is the "Sutra of Samyuktagama." It belonged to the Kuang-hui Monastery. It bears no signature, but there is a seal of Su Shih and two seals of Chao Meng-fu. These seals are well known. Here they are dry and weak, obviously faked. In addition, there is an unsigned colophon. It claims this sutra was written by Su Shih himself, and it is quite different from the faked works by Su Shih generally known in the market. This is farfetched, and the person who wrote the colophon knew it, and therefore did not sign his name [this colophon has been removed from the sutra]. In this sutra the words that conflict with the name of Emperor T'ai-tsung of the T'ang dynasty are avoided. It shows that this writing was by a citizen of the T'ang empire, and was not by Su Shih.

The Chin-su Temple lies at the foot of Chin-su Mountain, southwest of Hai-yen Hsien on the coast of northern Chekiang Province. It was founded in the period of the Three Kingdoms, sometime between A.D. 238 and 250. In the year 1008, the temple changed its name to Kuang-hui Ch'an Monastery. The Yüan dynasty scholar Sung Lien (1310–1381) wrote about this temple, and mentioned its wonderful handwritten sutras. The backing paper of these sutras was so fine that it was desired by painters and calligraphers (to be used for their own works once it had been separated from the sutra text).

The first line giving the name of the monastery appears to be looser and leaner than the writing of the text, and shows a different hand. The sticklike strokes of the text indicate that the artist knew the regular style of Yen Chen-ch'ing (no. 16). However, the broad strokes here are a bit affected, and the structure and spatial arrangement along the lines are quite different from the T'ang sutra style. This was written by a writer who lived in China proper, most likely in the south; it may be suggested that it was executed in the tenth century, copied from a version of the T'ang dynasty. Two rolls of sutras belonging to Cheng Te-k'un were included in the 1960 London exhibition, "The Arts of the Sung Dynasty" (see *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society*, xxxii [1959–60], nos. 294, 295). They are similar in style to the "Sutra of Samyuktagama" and come from the same temple. They are dated Sung in the catalogue.



雜阿含經卷第二十五

海鹽金粟山廣惠禪院大藏

一十一紙

宋元帝元嘉年中天竺三藏法師求那跋陀羅譯

今時世尊告尊者阿難此摩偷羅國將來世  
當有商人子名曰掘多掘多有子名優波掘  
多我滅度後百歲當作佛事於教授師中最  
為第一阿難汝遙見彼青色叢林不阿難白  
佛唯然已見世尊阿難是處名為優留曇荼  
山如來滅後百歲此山當有那叱跋置迦阿  
蘭若處此處隨順寂默最為第一今時世尊  
作是念我若以教法付囑人者恐我教法不  
得久住若付囑天者恐我教法亦不得久住  
世間人民則無有受法者我今當以正法付  
囑人天諸天世人共攝受法者我之教法則  
千歲不動今時世尊起世俗心時天帝釋及  
四天王知佛心念來詣佛所稽首禮足退  
坐一面今時世尊告天帝釋及四天王如  
來不久當於無餘涅槃而般涅槃我般涅槃  
後汝等當護持正法今時世尊復告東方天  
王汝當於東方護持正法次告南方西方北  
方天王汝當於北方護持正法過千歲後我  
教法滅時當有非法出於世間十善悉壞間  
浮提中惡風暴起水而不時世多飢饉雨則  
災雹江河消滅華果不成人無光澤虫村鬼  
村悉皆廢滅飲食失味殍實沉沒人民服食  
麤澀草木時有釋迦王耶輸那王鉢羅婆王  
兜沙羅王衆多眷屬如來頂骨佛牙佛鉢安  
置東方西方有王名鉢羅婆百千眷屬破壞

## 21. Cursive Script

Northern Sung dynasty

"Biographies of Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju" (*Lien P'o, Lin Hsiang-ju chuan*)  
by Ssu-ma Ch'ien (145 B.C.–before 86 B.C.)

Attributed to Huang T'ing-chien (1045–1105)

Handscroll, ink on paper

13" x 59' 9"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

No signature or seal of the artist appears on this scroll. There are two colophons, one by Hsiang Yüan-pien (1525–1590), who states that this scroll is by Huang T'ing-chien. Numerous seals are impressed on the scroll (see *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.*, New York, 1962, pp. 69–70).

Huang T'ing-chien, originally from Kiangsi Province, was a student of Su Shih (1036–1101). Their interest in art and the unfortunate political circumstances of their lives were similar, and thus they are frequently mentioned together. They are both outstanding figures in Chinese history and, along with Mi Fu (no. 22) and Ts'ai Hsiang (1012–1067), are the Four Great Calligraphers of the Sung dynasty. Huang T'ing-chien said that he attained enlightenment on a trip on the Yangtze River, when he saw the long oars in motion at the side of the boat. His regular and running styles, which are punctuated by extended and stressed strokes standing out like oars against water, bring this image to mind. His regular style greatly influenced later generations; in the early Ming dynasty, such well-known artists as Shen Chou (nos. 40, 41) and Wen Cheng-ming (nos. 48, 49) were devoted to his style.

The wild cursive script of Huang T'ing-chien is rare. A work in similar style, "Poems of Li Po" in the Fujii Saiseikai Yurinkan in Kyoto, Japan (see *Shodō zenshū*, vol. 15, Tokyo, 1970, pls. 62–68), which, like this scroll, has no seal or signature, is also attributed to Huang T'ing-chien. A writing with this same title by Huang T'ing-chien was mentioned by Chou Pi-ta (1126–1204) in his book *I-kung t'i pa*. Wang K'o-yü (1587–c.1662) in *Shan-hu-wang*, written in 1643, spoke highly of the "Poems of Li Po." Shen Chou, in his colophon attached to it, recounts how Su Shih and a friend on seeing the wild cursive script by Huang T'ing-chien suggested that he look at the Monk Huai-su's "Autobiography." But it was not until Huang T'ing-chien's exile to Szechwan in 1095 that he was able to see Huai-su's original "Autobiography." He studied the writing carefully, and it changed his style. Thus this writing can be dated after 1095. Comparing the style of the "Biographies of Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju" with the scroll in Japan leaves little doubt that they were done by the same hand. The artist manipulates the middle tip of the brush, as in seal script, to produce full, round lines. This is the manner of the Monk Huai-su (no. 17):

Huang T'ing-chien said of his own works:

For twenty years I practiced cursive calligraphy, but I was not able to shake off vulgar habits. In later years, when I chanced upon a writing by Su Hsün-ch'in [Tzu-mei, 1008–1048], I came to understand the ideas of the ancients. After that, I studied the handwriting of Chang Hsü [no. 15], the Monk Huai-su, and others. Only then did I discover the wonder of calligraphy.

21 (detail)



## 22. Running Script

Northern Sung dynasty

"Sailing on the Wu River" (*Wu Chiang chon chung shih*)

Attributed to Mi Fu (1051-1107)

Handscroll, ink on paper

12 1/4" x 18' 4 1/4"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The scroll is signed: "Written in a boat on the Wu-chiang on the paper sent me by Chu Pang-yen from Hsiu[-chou], Mi Yüan-chang" (see *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.*, New York, 1962, p. 66). The writing is unusual for Mi Fu not only in the unusual rhyme scheme of the poem, which is not to be found in collections of Mi Fu's poetry, but also in the signature. He rarely signed his work "Mi Yüan-chang." He generally used his given name "Fu," writing one character for Fu 芾 before the age of forty and another character for Fu 黻 after. This writing, however, has distinguished qualities; it is a noteworthy specimen of calligraphic art, even without the attribution to Mi Fu. Under the supervision of K'ung chi-su (see no. 39) of Shantung, this writing was engraved on stone, and ink rubbings of it are now extant. The calligrapher Chang Chao (no. 89) was mentioned as having helped K'ung make traced copies of a set of earlier writings by Mi Fu for the engraving.

Mi Fu's other names are Yüan-chang, Hai-yüeh, Nan-kung, Hsiang-yang man-shih, and Lu-men chü-shih. A connoisseur of art and an outstanding creative artist at the same time, Mi Fu was also a great collector, meticulous with regard to the mounting and preservation of works. As a critic, he was merciless. His publications on painting and calligraphy are among the most important in the history of Chinese art theory (see no. 31). During the years 1102-4, he served as the Dean of the newly founded Imperial College of Calligraphy and Painting under Emperor Hui-tsung. His own creations, both calligraphy and painting, are highly individual. His colorful and unconventional personality generated anecdotes about his life that have been cherished in the art world until the present day.

On his dashing calligraphy, his fellow artist Su Shih (1036-1101) commented: "Like sailing in the wind and riding a horse into battle, his writing is exhilarating." Huang T'ing-chien (no. 21) added: "Like a sharp knife in battle, or an arrow in flight, what it touches must be pierced." Mi Fu was a most admired artist, and many followed his style, including Wu Chü (twelfth century); Wang T'ing-yün (1151-1202); and his distant descendants, Mi Wan-chung (1570-1628) and Mi Han-wen (act. 1661-1692).

Mi Fu described his own approach to calligraphy: "Other people write with one side [of the brush]. I write with four sides." This means that he wrote like a painter, exploiting every movement of the brush, and was extravagant in the use of the tips — the middle tip, side tip, concealed tip, or exposed tip, turning, folding, modulating with "flesh" and "bone." He utilized dry and wet ink tonalities and rhythmic modulation of the thickness of the lines. There is great facility in his writing; he was a painter-calligrapher, while his fellow artists, such as Su Shih and Huang T'ing-chien, were literary calligraphers; the T'ang artists preceding them had been "calligrapher's calligraphers." The art of calligraphy, until the Sung dynasty, stressed the exploration of the metaphysical implications of painting. Artists more and more began to emphasize personality and individuality, suggesting that the art of creation, representing the "spirit of man," is more important than literary content.

岸一滴  
不<sub>レ</sub>可<sub>レ</sub>及  
況彼西  
江子也  
莫<sub>レ</sub>之  
汝乘時  
汝來一  
何晚

22 (detail)

朱邦  
吾自  
乘<sub>レ</sub>之  
紙矣  
江子  
中作  
朱克  
章

22 (detail, end of scroll)

## 23. Regular Script

Southern Sung dynasty

Couplet

Attributed to Emperor Kao-tsung (1107-1187, r. 1127-1162)

Round fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on silk

9" x 9<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

As translated by Max Loehr in *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.* (New York, 1962, p. 78), the text of the poem reads:

A thin mist over the pond envelops emerald green.

At the water's edge, in the late sun, dragon-flies play.

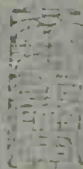
There is no signature. To the left of the writing appear three small characters meaning, "Bestowed upon Chih-chung"; impressed over it is a square seal reading, *yü-shu chih pao* ("treasure of imperial writing"). There are five collectors' seals, four of them belonging to P'an Cheng-wei (1791-1850), a well-known collector in Canton. This fan is one of twelve round fans, mounted together as an album, from P'an Cheng-wei's collection (see also nos. 25, 26). According to him, all of the fans are by Emperor Kao-tsung. The writing on this fan is in a style close to that of the well-known *Ch'ien tzu wen* by Kao-tsung, now in Japan (*Shodō zenshū*, vol. 16, pls. 18, 19). It is also comparable to the colophon Kao-tsung wrote after Wang Hsien-chih (no. 10E), *Ya i'ou wan t'ieh*, in the collection of the Shanghai Museum.

Kao-tsung, the tenth ruler after the establishment of Sung, was the ninth son of Emperor Hui-tsung. After the Chin invasion, he became the first Emperor of the Southern Sung dynasty, setting up a new capital, first in Nanking and then in Hangchow. He inherited his father's enthusiasm for art, and was a conscientious calligrapher himself. He wrote an essay on the art of calligraphy, *Han mo chih*, in which he told how he practiced writing almost every day for more than fifty years. Only then, he claimed, was he able to write as he desired. At first, he followed the style of Huang T'ing-chien (no. 21). Then he turned to Mi Fu (no. 22) and finally to Wang Hsi-chih (nos. 9, 10A-D). At different times, his writing style shows distinctly different influences. In addition, he also had helpers at court who wrote under his name. Liu Kuei-fei, one of his favorite consorts, has been mentioned as a fine calligrapher, and was among those who assisted him with his writings.



池上踈煙籠翡翠

水邊遲日戲蜻蜓



## 24. Running Script

Southern Sung dynasty

Two Lines from a Poem by Su Shih (1036-1101)

Attributed to Emperor Hsiao-tsung (1127-1194, r. 1163-1189)

Round fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on silk

9½" x 10"

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Kojiro Tomita, in the Museum of Fine Arts catalogue (*Portfolio of Chinese Paintings in the Museum (Han to Sung Periods)*, Cambridge, 1933, p. 13, pl. 86) translates these lines as:

The rain over the long river always brings sleep;  
The wind beating against the cliffs all day wafts the boat on.

He then explains:

The two lines are taken from a double quatrain entitled "At a Meeting with Ch'in Ta-hsü and San-liao and upon the Arrival of Kuan Yen-ch'ang and Hsü An-chung." In the note attached to the calligraphy, Yüan Yüan [Juan Yüan, 1764-1849] points out that the later version of this poem by Su Shih contains the characters for "boat anchored" instead of those for "boat moving" as in this case which is taken from the original version.

There is no signature, but only a gourd-shaped seal that reads *yü-shu* ("imperial writing"). There are collectors' seals of Prince Ch'ien-ning of Kweichow (fourteenth-fifteenth century), Juan Yüan, and others.

In the colophon, Juan Yüan says this work is by Emperor Kao-tsung (no. 23). Kojiro Tomita ascribes it to Emperor Hsiao-tsung. It is comparable to the stele engraving from an original writing by Hsiao-tsung, "A Stanza Corresponding to Priest Ling-yin," dated 1181 (*Shodō zenshū*, vol. 16, pl. 40). The style is thoughtful, rather brooding and conservative, with a mature and balanced control.

Hsiao-tsung, who succeeded Kao-tsung, was the eleventh Emperor of the Sung dynasty and a descendant of the seventh generation of T'ai-tsu (r. 960-975), the founder of the Sung dynasty. Kao-tsung, having no heir, had adopted Hsiao-tsung when he was a young boy. Hsiao-tsung was much less noted as a calligrapher than the earlier Sung Emperor-calligraphers Hui-tsung (r. 1100-1125) and Kao-tsung.

平生睡足連江雨

盡日舟行擘岸風





## 25. Regular Script

Southern Sung dynasty

Poem

Empress Yang (act. 1195–after 1225)

Round fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on silk

9¼" x 9⅝"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The poem refers to a flower painting, although it is not now accompanied by one:

My makeup thin and faded, scent a trace and nothing more.

Yet here before my eyes Spring's beauty still makes sport.

You said a year blooms quickly and as quickly dies.

Yielding to the boredom of luxury, I long for the land of wine.

*Translation by Adele Rickett*

The poem is signed "Yang Mei-tzu," with the seal of a single dragon. Numerous other seals appear (see *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.*, New York, 1962, pp. 80–81). For a long time Yang Mei-tzu was thought to have been the younger sister of Empress Yang, but recently Chiang Chao-shen of the National Palace Museum in Taipei has established that Yang Mei-tzu was a sobriquet of the Empress Yang, wife of Emperor Ning-tsung (r. 1195–1224). He has isolated a group of extant writings, including this one, identifying them as by the hand of the Empress (see "The Identity of Yang Mei-tzu and the Paintings of Ma Yüan," *National Palace Museum Bulletin*, 11, no. 2 [May 1967], pp. 1–14; 11, no. 3 [July 1967], pp. 9–14).

In contrast to her delicate writing, Empress Yang was a powerful figure at court. Ning-tsung had no heir, and adopted a nephew, Prince Hung, as the Crown Prince. After Ning-tsung's death, Empress Yang successfully supported the accession of Emperor Li-tsung (no. 29) instead of the Crown Prince.

Ning-tsung is recorded as having been a fine calligrapher, and Empress Yang's writing is said to have resembled his. She was especially fond of the art of Ma Yüan and Ma Lin, and inscribed poetry on their works. Her writing has the distinct flair of an amateur, a natural simplicity.

薄薄殘粧淡淡香

眼前猶得玩春光

公言一歲輕榮悴

肯厭繁華惜醉鄉

楊妹子



## 26. Regular Script

Southern Sung dynasty  
Couplet by Han Yü (768-824)  
By an Emperor of the Southern Sung dynasty  
Round fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on silk  
8 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ "  
Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The text of this couplet has been translated by Max Loehr as follows:

Its lofty appearance defies the sternness of autumn;  
Its chaste color surpasses the lush beauty of spring.

(See *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.*, New York, 1962, pp. 79-80.)

Noticeably missing from this survey of Chinese calligraphy are writings by Emperor Ning-tsung (r. 1195-1224). An album leaf in regular script in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, has been attributed to him (see Kojiro Tomita, *Portfolio of Chinese Paintings in the Museum (Han to Sung Periods)*, Cambridge, 1933, p. 8, pl. 41), but it really falls more into the stylistic tradition of Li-tsung (r. 1225-1264). While this fan is of undetermined authorship, it is distinctive and has an evident flavor of authenticity. The regular script is quite independent, and the possibility that Ning-tsung was its calligrapher is to be considered.

The solidity of this regular script derives from that of the T'ang priest Chih-yung and Yen Chen-ch'ing (no. 16), and is somewhat reminiscent of the style of Chang Chi-chih (1186-1263), whose mature years were spent in the court of Li-tsung. But Li-tsung's calligraphic identity is firmly established (no. 29), and the style of this fan does not relate to it.

The work on calligraphy, *Shu Shih hui yao*, compiled by T'ao Tsung-i (act. 1360) claimed that the writing of the Empress Yang (no. 25) resembled that of Ning-tsung; it also claimed that Ning-tsung's writing followed that of his grandfather Kao-tsung (no. 23). Chang Chi-chih's uncle, Chang Hsiao-hsiang (1132-1169), an excellent calligrapher, served under Kao-tsung, who greatly admired his regular script in the style of Yen Chen-ch'ing. Chang Chi-chih inherited the style of his uncle. Ning-tsung's reign occurred between the two, and the style of this fan falls within the range of the Chang family. Thus it is possible that it belongs to Ning-tsung.



高標凌秋嚴

貞色奪春媚

## 27. Regular Script

Mongol-Yüan period

"Poem of Farewell to Liu Man" (*Sung Liu Man shih*)

Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai (1190-1244)

1240

Handscroll, ink on paper

14  $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 9' 3  $\frac{1}{8}$ "

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

In Achilles Fang's translation, the poem and dedicatory note read:

In the region of Yün-chung and Hsüan-te [NW Shansi] half of the black-haired multitude have fled from their homesteads;

Only one thousand people under your jurisdiction are living safely and securely [none of them fleeing].

You are now among the ablest administrators of our Dynasty;

Your great fame is as high as the T'ai-shan.

On the day after full moon of the tenth moon, winter, in the *keng-tzu* year [November 1, 1240], I write this poem on behalf of Liu Man of Yang-men, who requested a poem from me as he is about to leave for his post; I am here commending him for his able administration. Despotical officials and shy underofficials, may they feel ashamed! Yü-ch'üan.

(See *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.*, New York, 1962, pp. 93-94.)

Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai was a Khitan descendant of the royal family of the Liao dynasty. He served under the Mongol khans, attaining the rank of Prime Minister, and was an outstanding statesman. He is now better remembered as a poet. His calligraphic work is rare, and therefore little known. His regular style has the distinct influence of Yen Chen-ch'ing (no. 16).

Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's use of the brush is precise and dynamic. There is a natural, archaic force in this writing, a heroic calligraphy that shows a kinship to the steles of the Northern dynasties. It is clearly the work of a man of action.

雲宣黎  
廢半逋  
逃獨爾  
千民樓堵  
牢已預  
天朝能吏  
數倩名

文正公集卷之四

27 (detail, beginning of scroll)



## 28. Running Script

Southern Sung dynasty

Three Poems

Attributed to Chao Meng-chien (1199-1267)

Handscroll, ink on paper

13  $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 10'  $\frac{5}{8}$ "

1260

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The first and second poems concern two plum-blossom paintings, and how to paint plum blossoms. The third concerns bamboo painting. Chao Meng-chien wrote these three poems on one scroll for his younger relative, Huang-fu Tzu-ch'ang, in 1260. There are seven colophons, the dates ranging from 1267 to 1424, and numerous seals (see *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.*, New York, 1962, pp. 96-97).

Chao Meng-chien was a member of the Sung royal family, and once served as a Prefect. A connoisseur of art, he had a fine collection, housed in a boat, in which he frequently roamed along the rivers and lakes, preferring the life of a free spirit. According to the earliest colophon on this scroll, he died before the Mongol regime of the Yüan dynasty.

Chao Meng-chien was known for his poetry, calligraphy, and painting. However, he was much less productive than his cousin Chao Meng-fu (nos. 30, 31), and few of his works are known. In painting, only some orchids and narcissus motifs in ink remain; a long inscription, such as this, is rare. His calligraphic style is typically Sung, and his manner close to that of Ts'ai Hsiang (1012-1067), derived from the T'ang calligrapher Ou-yang Hsün (557-641). Its structure is lean and airy. The long limblike strokes, floating in his writing, are not unlike the orchid leaves in his painting.

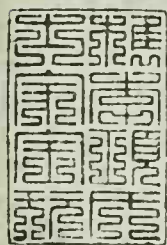
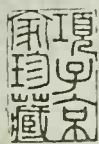
景定元禩良月六日

所寓邳乃壻橋王

氏家二教怕下書諸

王孫趙子固

居士化



## 29. Running Script

Southern Sung dynasty

Couplet by Wang Wei (699–759)

Emperor Li-tsung (b. 1203, r. 1225–1264)

Round fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on silk

9 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 9 $\frac{1}{16}$ "

1256

Cleveland Museum of Art, Purchased, John L. Severance Fund

The poem, as translated by Wai-kam Ho in the *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* (LI, no. 2 [February 1964], p. 30), reads:

I walk unto where waters end —  
And sit down to watch when clouds arise.

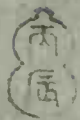
To the left are three small characters, "Bestowed upon Chung-kuei." Above this inscription is a gourd-shaped seal bearing the date 1256; below, is another imperial seal, *yü-shu chih pao* ("treasure of imperial writing").

The writing on this dated fan by Li-tsung is identical to his inscription on the painting, "Landscape at Sunset," by Ma Lin in the Nezu Art Museum, Tokyo (see *Selected Masterpieces from the Collection of the Nezu Art Museum*, Tokyo, 1968, pl. 2), on which appears a seal in the same gourd shape dated 1254. These works firmly establish the handwriting of Li-tsung. It is quite different from that of his forefathers, with an original way of forming characters and a particular, personal style. Li-tsung was the fourteenth Sung Emperor, of the tenth generation after T'ai-tsu. As a calligrapher, he was completely overshadowed by his ancestors.

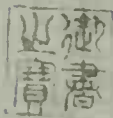


行到水窮處

坐看雲起時



馬中佳



### 30. Running Script

Yüan dynasty

"Four Anecdotes from the Life of Wang Hsi-chih" (*Wang Hsi-chih ssu shih*)

Chao Meng-fu (1254-1322; see also no. 36A)

Handscroll, ink on paper

9½" x 45⅞"

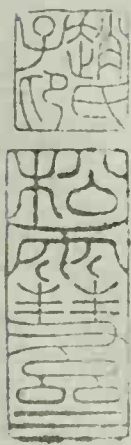
Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

Four well-known anecdotes about Wang Hsi-chih (nos. 9, 10A-D) are recorded on this scroll. Chao Meng-fu's signature, "Tzu-ang," and several seals appear. Eight colophons follow, including several by noted Chinese artists, among them Chang Yü (no. 35), Ni Tsan (1301-1374), Wu K'uan (no. 43A); and Chou T'ien-ch'iu (no. 56) (see *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.*, New York, 1962, pp. 100-101).

Chao Meng-fu was also known as Tzu-ang, Sung-hsüeh, and by other names. He was a member of the Sung royal family, a cousin of Chao Meng-chien (no. 28). After the fall of the Sung dynasty, he joined the Yüan civil service, and was highly honored by the Mongols. Chao Meng-fu mastered all the styles of calligraphy, and was highly productive; his surviving works are quite numerous. In 1310, he purchased a copy of the *Lan-t'ing hsü* ("Orchid Pavilion Preface") by Wang Hsi-chih, which was an ink-rubbing edition of Ting-wu (see no. 10B). He studied it day and night, for thirty-three days, and wrote thirteen colophons on the writing, establishing the history of the work, its engravings, and its aesthetic value. (A fragment of Chao Meng-fu's copy of *Lan-t'ing hsü* and colophons still survives today.) It marked a turn in his style, and he came entirely under the influence of the school of Wang Hsi-chih. This writing shows Wang Hsi-chih's influence and thus is datable after 1310. Later, however, he leaned toward the Northern stele technique.

Yü Chi (1272-1348), a calligrapher and admirer of Chao Meng-fu, spoke of "the gift of calligraphy": "Some are born with it, others acquire it by study. The one who has innate gifts and has enhanced them by study, must be superb. Chao Meng-fu was one of these." He was rated by some connoisseurs as the best calligrapher of the Yüan dynasty. To his critics, he was thought to have been too suave, a bit on the sweet side. It is agreed, however, that he was one of the outstanding masters in the development of Chinese calligraphy. He was fully conscious of the history of art, and strived for the growth of his own ability through systematic discipline. He had a broad and deeply involved interest in art. He concerned himself with the knowledge of epigraphy, literature, philosophy, painting, calligraphy, and connoisseurship, all that was related to "how" creativity is to be approached. In doing so, he went back to the past, attempting to "recapture the spirit of antiquity" (*fu-ku*). In calligraphy this meant studying the works of the Chin and the T'ang dynasty (before 950). His balance and analytical attitude were the qualities most admired by his followers. To a great extent, Wen Cheng-ming (nos. 48-51) and Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (nos. 60-62), two outstanding personalities in art, patterned themselves after the scholarly precepts of Chao Meng-fu.

義之嘗自書表與  
穆帝使張翼寫効  
一毫不可題後乃之  
華之初不覺更詳者  
乃彰也小人幾為亂  
矣





### 31. Regular Script

Yüan dynasty

"History of Painting" (*Hua shih*) by Mi Fu (1051-1107)

Chao Meng-fu (1254-1322; see also no. 36 A)

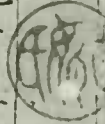
Album leaves, ink on paper

6¾" x 4¾" (each)

Wango H. C. Weng Collection, New York

This album, written by Chao Meng-fu, contains the complete text of Mi Fu's *Hua shih* (see translation of selections in Lin Yü-t'ang, *Chinese Theory of Art*, New York, 1967). It is unsigned, but the seal "Chao-shih Tzu-ang" is impressed at the end of the manuscript. Chao Meng-fu copied a great number of manuscripts of old masters, more than a hundred with lengthy texts having been recorded. His contemporaries and fellow artists, Ni Tsan (1301-1374) and Hsien-yü Shu (no. 32), both considered Chao Meng-fu's small regular style the best of all the styles he mastered. Among these, the works of his later years are regarded as the finest examples, being attractive and tenuous, as seen here. The style of this calligraphy seems to be close to his writing of the second century B.C. text, "Biography of Chi An," dated 1320, when he was sixty-seven years of age (see *Shodō zenshū*, vol. 17, pls. 22-25).

米元章畫史



杜甫詩謂薛少保惜哉功名迤但見善畫傳甫  
老儒汲于功名豈不知固有時命殆是平生  
寂寥所慕嗟乎五王之功業為女子笑而少保  
之筆精墨妙摹印亦廣石泐則重刻絹破則重  
補又假以行者何可數也然則才子鑒士寶鈿  
瑞錦鑠襲數十以為玩回視五王之煒燁皆  
糠粃埃壒奚足道哉雖孺子知其不逮少保遠  
甚明白余故題所得蘇氏薛稷二鶴云遼海未  
稀歸顧螻蟻仰霄弧爰留清耳從容雅步在庭  
除浩蕩開心存万里乘軒未失入佳談寫真不

### 32. Cursive Script

Yüan dynasty

"Returning Home" (*Kuei ch'ü lai tz'u*) by T'ao Ch'ien (365-427)

Hsien-yü Shu (1256-1301)

1300

Handscroll, ink on paper

11 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 84" (colophon)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of John C. Ferguson

This writing is a colophon attached to the painting "Home Again" by Ch'ien Hsüan, who wrote a poem on it himself. Because of Ch'ien Hsüan's loyalty to the Sung monarchy, it is not likely that he and Hsien-yü Shu really knew each other, although they lived in the same region and were active about the same time. Moreover, the writing does not appear to have been written at the same time as the painting. Hsien-yü Shu's calligraphy follows the painting on separate paper, and is the complete text of T'ao Ch'ien's famous prose-poem (*see* no. 61, and translation in Lily Pao-hu Chang and Marjorie Sinclair, *The Poems of T'ao Ch'ien*, Honolulu, 1953). It is dated 1300 and signed, "Hsien-yü Shu wrote [this] at an inn in Yangchow." Three of his seals follow.

Hsien-yü Shu was also known as Po-chi and K'un-hsüeh-min. His ancestors were Korean, and thus he also called himself Chi-tzu chih i ("A Descendant of Chi-tzu"). (Chi-tzu was a Chinese who is said to have migrated to Korea at the end of the Shang-Yin dynasty [about 1028 B.C.].) Hsien-yü Shu served once as Recorder in the Board of Rites at the Yüan court. In his middle age, some time after he was thirty-five, he retired from official life, and devoted himself to the arts. He died at the age of forty-five.

Like Chao Meng-fu, he was a conscientious student of calligraphy. Some critics liked his work and spoke of his running script as being as fine as that of Chao Meng-fu (nos. 30, 31), and without its sweetness. Chao Meng-fu, a good friend of his, went so far as to praise Hsien-yü Shu's calligraphy as better than his own. But there are others who place Hsien-yü Shu after Chao Meng-fu. Both artists accomplished something similar, but each retained his own individuality.

This is a standard example of the work of Hsien-yü Shu, which shows his own characteristics, quite different from those of Chao Meng-fu. He preferred to write with a worn, blunt brush. The feeling in it is like "an ancient pine or an aged cypress." He was influenced by Lu Chi (261-303) and Sun Kuo-t'ing (act. 648-703).

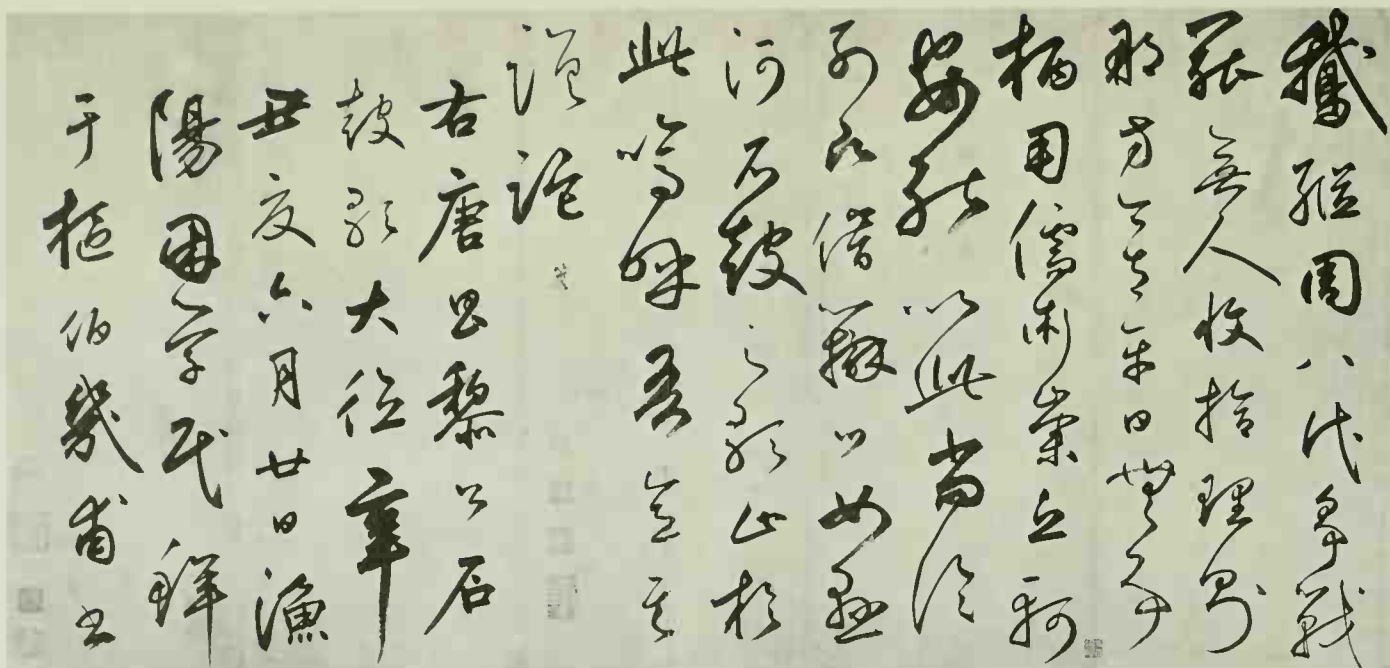


留胡為乎遑々之何之  
富貴非吾事也不可  
謂懷正居一也汪武拉枝  
之艱難其東年以歸  
詠清源之賦詩歌亦  
化以歸吾亦夫之而後  
矣

大德庚子十一月十

二日鮮于樞書于

維陽客舍



33 (detail, end of scroll)

### 33. Cursive Script

Yüan dynasty

"Song of the Stone Drums" (*Shih-ku ko*) by Han Yü (768–824)

Hsien-yü Shu (1256–1301)

1301

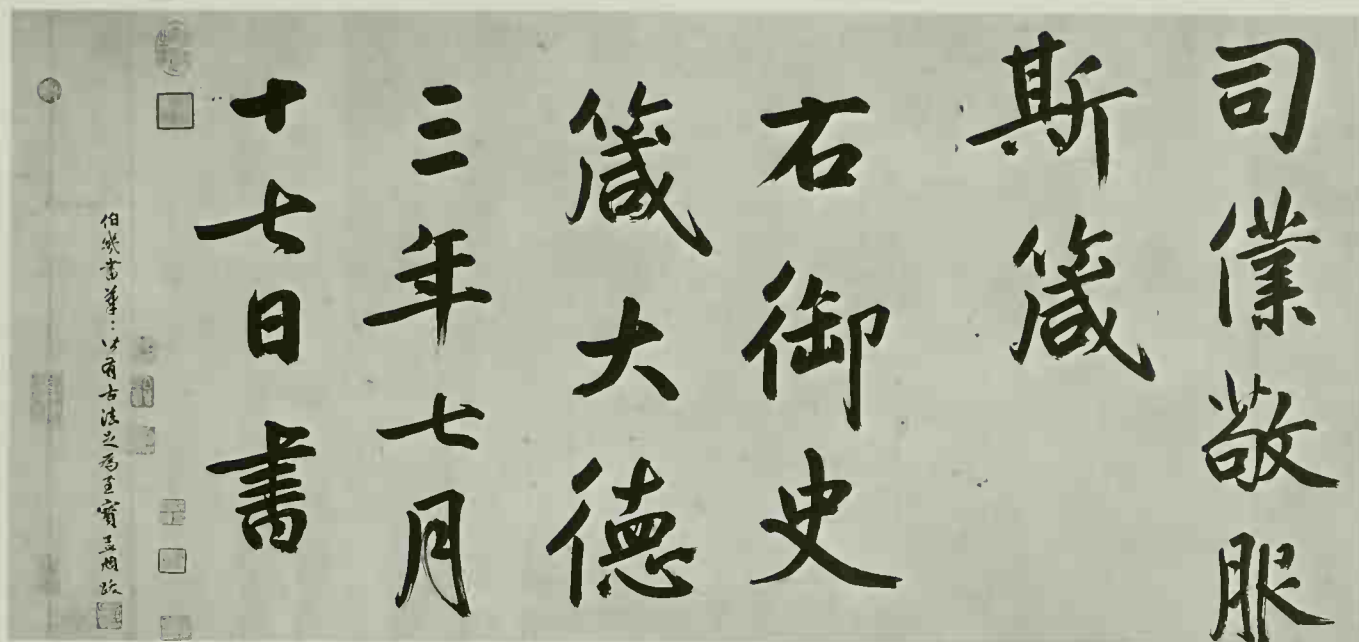
Handscroll, ink on paper

17<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" x 11' 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The text is a song about the ten "Stone Drums" (no. 4), a famous poem by Han Yü. It is signed and dated, and includes four colophons and numerous collectors' seals (see *Chinese Painting and Calligraphy in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.*, New York, 1962, pp. 98–99; complete translations of the colophons appear in Sherman E. Lee and Wai-kam Ho, *Chinese Art under the Mongols: The Yüan Dynasty (1279–1368)*, Cleveland, 1968, no. 274).

This writing, done a year after "Returning Home" (no. 32), varies distinctly in mood. Hsien-yü Shu used a new brush, the lines have ribbonlike foldings (see fig. 9 b), and the characters vary from large to small. Here he was fully able to utilize the style of the school of Wang Hsi-chih. Larger in size and not accompanied by a painting, it is a work of calligraphy done for its own sake. Hsien-yü Shu was solely a calligrapher, never a painter.



34 (detail, end of scroll)

### 34. Regular Script

Yüan dynasty

"Admonitions to the Imperial Censor" (*Yü-shih-chen*)

Hsien-yü Shu (1256–1301)

1299

Handscroll, ink on paper

19½" x 13' 5¼"

The Art Museum, Princeton University

Hsien-yü Shu's signature line at the end reads: "Over the right side [of this line] is *Yü-shih-chen*, [which I] wrote on the seventeenth day of the seventh month, in 1299." Three of his seals are impressed beside it. Collectors' seals include the imperial seals of the Emperors Jen-tsung (r. 1796–1820) and P'u-yi (r. 1908–1912). Others belong to Liang Ch'ing-piao (1620–1691) and Han Feng-hsi (c. 1700).

Ten colophons are by connoisseurs of the Yüan dynasty. The eleventh colophon, with title section, was written by the twentieth-century painter and connoisseur Chang Ta-ch'ien. He certifies that this scroll was originally in the former Palace collection. It left with P'u-yi for Mukden, and it was not until 1945 that the scroll was put onto the market. Among the larger scripts of Hsien-yü Shu, this is the best, according to Chang Ta-ch'ien.

The last Yüan colophon is that of Mo Ch'ang. It is dated 1352 and certifies that he was the proud owner of this scroll, and at his request, the other nine colophons were inscribed. Among the best known of the writers are Chao Meng-fu (nos. 30, 31) and Teng Wen-yüan (1258–1328). Chao Meng-fu praised this writing as having the "ancient discipline in every single stroke." Later Mo Ch'ang reported that Chao Meng-fu was impressed by this writing, claiming that Chao alone knew the essence of Hsien-yü Shu's excellence. The other colophons all speak of this work with great admiration, and all agree that it is conservative, more austere than his usual style.



### 35. Running Script

Yüan dynasty

Two Poems

Attributed to Chang Yü (1277-1348)

Handscroll, ink on paper

11<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" x 63<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The two poems are for two landscape paintings by Chang Yen-fu. Chang Yü describes the landscapes with celestial grandeur. Then he concludes: "At right [are poems] for two paintings by Chang Yen-fu, 'Taoist Monastery in Snowy Hills' and 'The Hermitage in a Cloudy Forest.'" It is signed "Yü" and a cipher. Between the signatures is his seal "Chen-chü." At the left side of these words are three lines in small regular script. They begin with: "Twenty-sixth day in the fourth month, practicing in the evening rain. . . ." The remaining phrases refer to two friends at a studio, and are followed by Taoist mystic expressions. The meaning is obscure. Another seal of the artist, "Po-yü-tzu," appears below it. A seal belonging to Liang Chang-chü (1775-1849), next to the writing, is the only collector's seal. There is a large title by the twentieth-century connoisseur Chang Ta-ch'ien describing how it was given to him as a present.

These two poems were recorded in *Wu-lin wang che in chu* (3/37 a-b, and 1/18 b of the addenda), according to Jonathan Chaves, where the painter's name, Chang, was misprinted as Chao. They were also recorded in 1680-82 by Pien Yung-yü (*Shih-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao*, 18/228) with exactly the same misprinting of the name, Chao instead of Chang. They are part of a set of fifty-five poems composed by Chang Yü and written himself. These two poems had three other poems between them. Without seeing the original set of poems, one cannot make a comparison with these. It is possible that Chang Yü could have repeated the poems more than once. Generally, his writing is very dramatic; this is quite tame in comparison to his usual style.

Chang Yü was also known as T'ien-yü, Po-yü, and by his pen names Chen-chü (Chen-jen) and Chü-ch'ü wai-shih. He was a native of Chekiang Province. When he was about twenty years old, he became a Taoist priest. He traveled freely from temple to temple, and created poems, paintings, and calligraphy in their scenic settings. His circle of friends were artists and poets, Chao Meng-fu (nos. 30, 31), Huang Kung-wang, and Ni Tsan (1301-1374) among them. At first, he was influenced by Chao Meng-fu, then he turned to the stele style of Li Yung (678-747). He developed the most unexpected combination of the regular and cursive scripts, which sometimes resembles Taoist magical scriptures. His friends found his creative work representative of his personality, as pure as a spirited crane in his independent way of life.

玄豹藏牙  
深霧雨孤陰缺  
亭小房櫺櫺  
求許郭  
仙人定知隔瓊  
井第幾重  
右題張齊補  
畫雪山樓觀雲水  
隱居二圖雨旦

四月廿六日晚雨試筆

天鏡松菴此時偃卧清涼室

中而小龍乃在大季袖中矣雨



36A (detail, signature and seal)

### 36. Running and Regular Scripts

Yüan dynasty

Two Colophons

Chao Meng-fu (1254–1322) and Kuo Pi (1301–1355)

Handscroll, ink on paper

The Cleveland Museum of Art, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Severance A. Millikin

#### A. Running Script

Chao Meng-fu (1254–1322; *see also* nos. 30, 31)

10<sup>9</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" x 11"

#### B. Regular Script

Kuo Pi (1301–1355)

1325

10<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" x 36<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>"

These two colophons are on the painting, "Barbarian Royalty Worshipping Buddha," attributed to Chao Kuang-fu (act. 960–975). Translations of the complete texts appear in Sherman E. Lee and Wai-kam Ho, *Chinese Art under the Mongols: The Yüan Dynasty (1279–1368)* (Cleveland, 1968, no. 275).

Kuo Pi, also known as T'ien-hsi, was a native of Kiangsu Province. He was better known as a painter than a calligrapher. Although much younger than Chao Meng-fu, he was his close friend and is said to have been influenced in the practice of art by his association with Chao Meng-fu. Kuo Pi's bamboo painting does show the style of the Chao family, but his landscape painting is free and includes the use of moist ink washes, which is quite different from the manner of Chao Meng-fu. Here he wrote in the sutra style; it has an amateurish appearance that may have been deliberate. Kuo Pi's works in painting or calligraphy are seldom seen; a long inscription such as this is even rarer.



佛法入中國子作年殆是家  
有其像見之者生歡敬心  
不啻以古今畫手生於此地

子昂

36A

無為居士正法眼藏銘并序

如來舉花溥示大眾惟迦葉微笑乃曰吾正  
法眼藏付囑迦葉二十七世而達磨為震旦初  
祖達磨傳磁州慧可、傳山谷三祖僧璨、  
傳黃梅四祖道信、傳黃梅五祖弘忍、傳  
曹溪六祖惠能皆授大永寶鉢為天下信其  
後達者無數咸有師承不待大永寶鉢而已  
信矣無為子為黃梅今因登祖山迴念過去諸  
祖震旦五人而會吾境者三世六祖如受  
永寶鉢其家子  
孫世數漸速惜其淪墜乃米國朝傳燈廣燈  
二錄諸方語要及耆老所傳載為一圖謂之正  
法眼藏宗派叙而銘曰

吾聞如來大光明藏含攝諸法與太虛等若身  
若心天地萬物有識無識有相無相皆吾藏中  
種諸寶具正眼者則能照之不具正眼為彼  
所眩其眩惟何妄見同異或生愛樂或起厭苦  
流浪輪迴未嘗休止吾藏諸寶化為塵穢如  
來大慈為諸迷塗舉示一華以開正眼惟大  
迦葉默然微笑以是付囑流通敷演菩提  
達磨初入震旦炳一寶炬分百千燈燈燦燦耀

36B (detail)

### 37. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Sung K'ao (1327-1387)

Handscroll, ink on gold-flecked paper

10½" x 27¼"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The poem most likely was composed by the artist. Its translation may be rendered as follows:

My house stands in a bamboo grove, on a stream outside the city wall.  
Brush and ink-stone are my hoe and plow;  
No ditches furrow my spirit, no boundaries limit my mind.  
On Autumn days, sparrows chirp in the rice paddies;  
No wheel ruts pit the road in the Spring.  
I've sown my seeds, and I am content, leading the life of a recluse,  
Leaning on my cane, watching my children and grandchildren.

Written by Sung Chung-wen.

*Translation by Jonathan Chaves*

An oval seal below it seems to have belonged to the artist. Among the many collectors' seals, the better-known ones are those of Miao Yüeh-tsao (1682-1761) and K'ung Kuang-t'ao (mid-nineteenth century).

Sung K'ao, also known as Chung-wen, K'ao-wen, and Nan-kung-sheng, came from Wu Hsien (Suchow) in Kiangsu Province. He was known as both a bamboo painter and calligrapher. As a student, he practiced these arts intensively. It is said that he used up a thousand sheets of paper a day in practicing brushwork. Eventually, he became a master of calligraphy. After serving one term as Prefect, he retired and devoted his time to collecting ancient bronzes and to calligraphy, playing his seven-string lute, and composing poetry. He was also known as a generous host: he entertained his guests lavishly at his family estate. In the early Ming dynasty, he was sometimes joined with two other calligraphers with the family name "Sung," Sung Sui (1344-1380) and Sung Kuang (fourteenth century). They were referred to as the "Three Sung." However, the work of the other two is little known today.

His regular script was in the tradition of Chung Yao (no. 8). His cursive script followed the style of "On the Seventeenth" (no. 9) by Wang Hsi-chih. The style of his friend, the well-known poet-calligrapher Yang Wei-chen (1296-1370), was very close to that of Sung K'ao. Only a few other examples of Sung K'ao's cursive script, in the same manner and of equally high quality, are known. He combined some features of the official style in his cursive script, following a style that was known in the early Han dynasty, when the abbreviated style began to increase in usage. This particular combination, used for writing drafts, was referred to as *chang-ts'ao*, which distinguished it from other styles of cursive script. This style fell into disrepute during the late T'ang and Sung dynasties. Sung K'ao, however, revived the style in his refreshing way. He gave his lines a very flexible movement, like dancing ribbons, gracefully folding and turning to their completion.

自鄧當城

水竹為平生

昔年親見親筆

性自好之也

漢江如海

長為所賦秋

月移星雪

卷中書卷

卷絕輕福

近身種

西海飽著

兒孫楊杖藜

雲中記



### 38. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Prose-Poem

Yao Shou (1422–1495)

1489

Handscroll, ink on paper

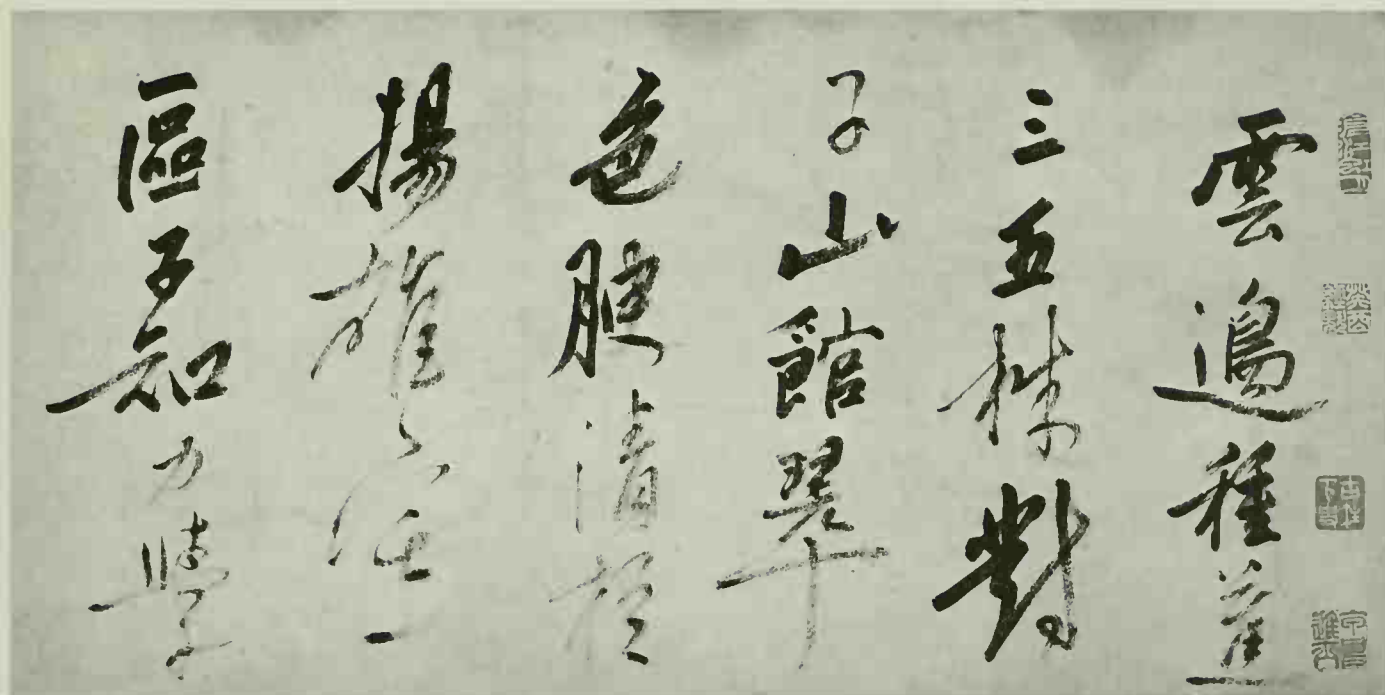
12" x 25' 7<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>"

The Art Museum, Princeton University

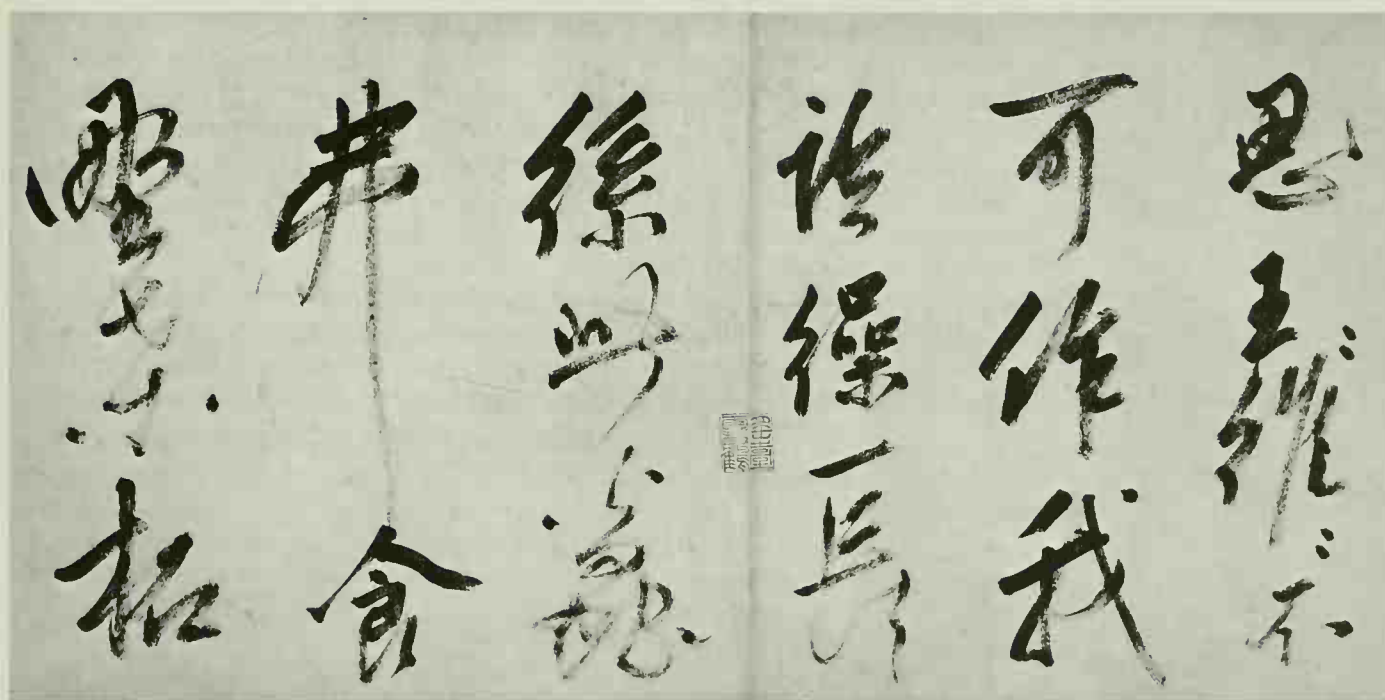
The prose-poem, probably by the artist, discusses themes about banana plants. It is dated 1489 and signed, "Tzu-hsia-pi-yüeh-hsien-jen, Yao Kung-shou." Four of the artist's seals are impressed before the first line of the poem, another comes after the poem but before the signature. Three colophons follow the writing, one without a signature, the other two belonging to former owners in this century.

Yao Shou was also known as Kung-shou, Yün-tung-i-shih, Tzu-hsia-pi-yüeh-hsien-jen, and by many other names. He was a native of Chia-shan (Chekiang Province). Soon after obtaining his academic degree, he was appointed to the post of Censor. Later, demoted to the position of Prefect, he withdrew from official life, and lived as a freelance artist, traveling along the rivers of the Wu and Yüeh regions. He is known to have been a great lover of music. Whenever he was at home, he created poetry, painting, and calligraphy in the studio built especially for him. After the age of forty, he turned more and more to Taoism, and his poems are filled with esoteric references of unknown origin. His painting is in the manner of Wu Chen (1280–1354). He preferred moist round strokes done with a blunt, old brush. There is an innate plainness and frankness in his style, which he learned from the secluded artists of the Yüan dynasty. He was a close friend of Shen Chou (nos. 40, 41) and Wen Lin (1445–1499), the father of Wen Cheng-ming. It is said that he used to pay high prices to buy back his own paintings, which he preferred to own himself.

His calligraphy is like his painting. In his running style, as seen here, the lines are written as in seal script, showing full round tips. Always properly controlled in mood and style, he wrote this scroll at the age of sixty-seven. It reveals a considerate and rather self-conscious temperament.



38 (detail, beginning of scroll)



38 (detail)

### 39. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty

"Song of the Cursive Script" (*Ts'ao-shu ko*)

Chang Pi (1425-1487)

Handscroll, ink on yellow paper with wood-engraved floral design printed in gold

9 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 72 $\frac{1}{4}$ "

Center of Asian Art and Culture, The Avery Brundage Collection,  
San Francisco

The "Song of the Cursive Script," a poem most likely composed by the artist himself, is a lyrical description of the qualities and spirit of fine cursive script. There is no signature of the artist, but two of his seals are impressed below the last two words of the writing. They read, "Tung-hai" and "Chang Pi chih yin." Three colophons follow the writing. One by K'ung Yü-yen is dated 1685; the other two are by K'ung Chi-su (1726-1790). Both of these men have reputations as calligraphers, and both are from Ch'ü-fu (Shantung Province) and the direct descendants of K'ung-tzu (Confucius).

Chang Pi, who also called himself Tung-hai, was especially noted for his cursive writing and his poetry. A friend of the intellectual group of the early Ming dynasty, he was well thought of by them. He loved to create large "delirious cursive script," winding his brush line at length in the manner of Chang Hsü (no. 15). However, he was criticized for a certain grossness. Three colophons give a good account of Chang Pi and his works:

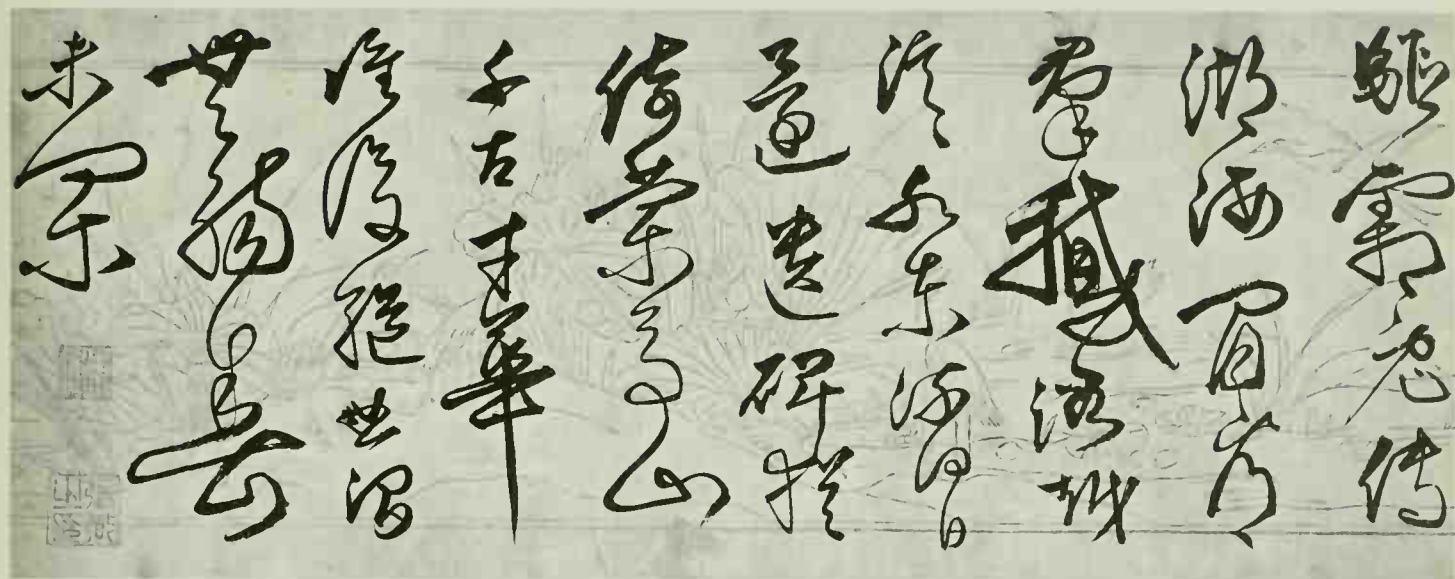
Chang-sha, Master Li [Tung-yang, 1447-1516] in his *Hsi ya shih hua*, spoke of Chang Tung-hai [Pi], of his famous cursive writing and interesting poems. Chang Tung-hai himself once said of his own art that his calligraphy was not as good as his poetry, and his poetry not as good as his essays. I, myself, would respond to his own remark as being that of "the hero who is modest and likes to fool people," and one should not take it seriously. Ch'ien Yü-shan [Jen-fu, 1446-1526] once praised Chang Tung-hai's writing as being strange but powerful and carefree, and that it shook the world. Since then, his reputation has grown and spread everywhere. When composing poetry, he usually made no draft. When a request arrived, he wrote directly on the paper, and it was taken away. As to his own remark mentioned above, his writing must have been better than his poetry. I had always wished to know his work, but it was not until this Summer [1685] that I acquired this scroll by exchanging it for a bag of millet. When I read its first half I thought it was by Li Tung-yang. It was not until I read to the end [and saw the two seals] that I knew it was by Chang Tung-hai. I feel lucky to have this scroll, and to learn that these two men [Chang Pi and Li Tung-yang] served the court at the same time, as colleagues and friends. It is amazing to see how much alike is their script.

Li Tung-yang was the father of my grandmother. We have many of his writings in the family. Now I mount the two [one by Li Tung-yang and one by Chang Pi] together. This is a great sight! I washed my hands, and wrote this in 1685, Student K'ung Yü-yen.

Li Tung-yang was a Premier and a fine scholar. His writing is no longer with this scroll. K'ung Chi-su wrote the second colophon:

Chang Tung-hai's cursive script is well known in the Ming dynasty. I had seen his writing only in ink rubbings. This is the first handwriting I know of. It is precious.





39 (detail)

His use of the brush and the character structure are derived from the Chin dynasty, while Li Tung-yang's manner has been learned from Yen Chen-ch'ing of the T'ang dynasty. In my family there exist many writings by Tung-yang. Before examining this entire writing one can distinguish the differences, even without seeing the seals at the end. 1769, Summer, Student K'ung Chi-su.

K'ung Chi-su is correct. This writing is different from the manner of Li Tung-yang. The first colophon writer, K'ung Yü-yen, seems to be an older relation of K'ung Chi-su. K'ung Chi-su also wrote the last colophon:

There are people who criticize Chang Tung-hai, saying that his writing is too skillful, and that it shows vulgar habits. This is harsh, yet, they have a point. For the writings of facile artists easily become vulgar. Even the great master Chao Meng-fu was attacked [for being too skillful]. Calligraphy as accomplished as that of Tung-hai should be accepted as art. If one is so critical, how many of those writers in the T'ang and Sung dynasties would remain as real masters? 1780, thirteenth day of the tenth month, K'ung Chi-su, writing for the second time.

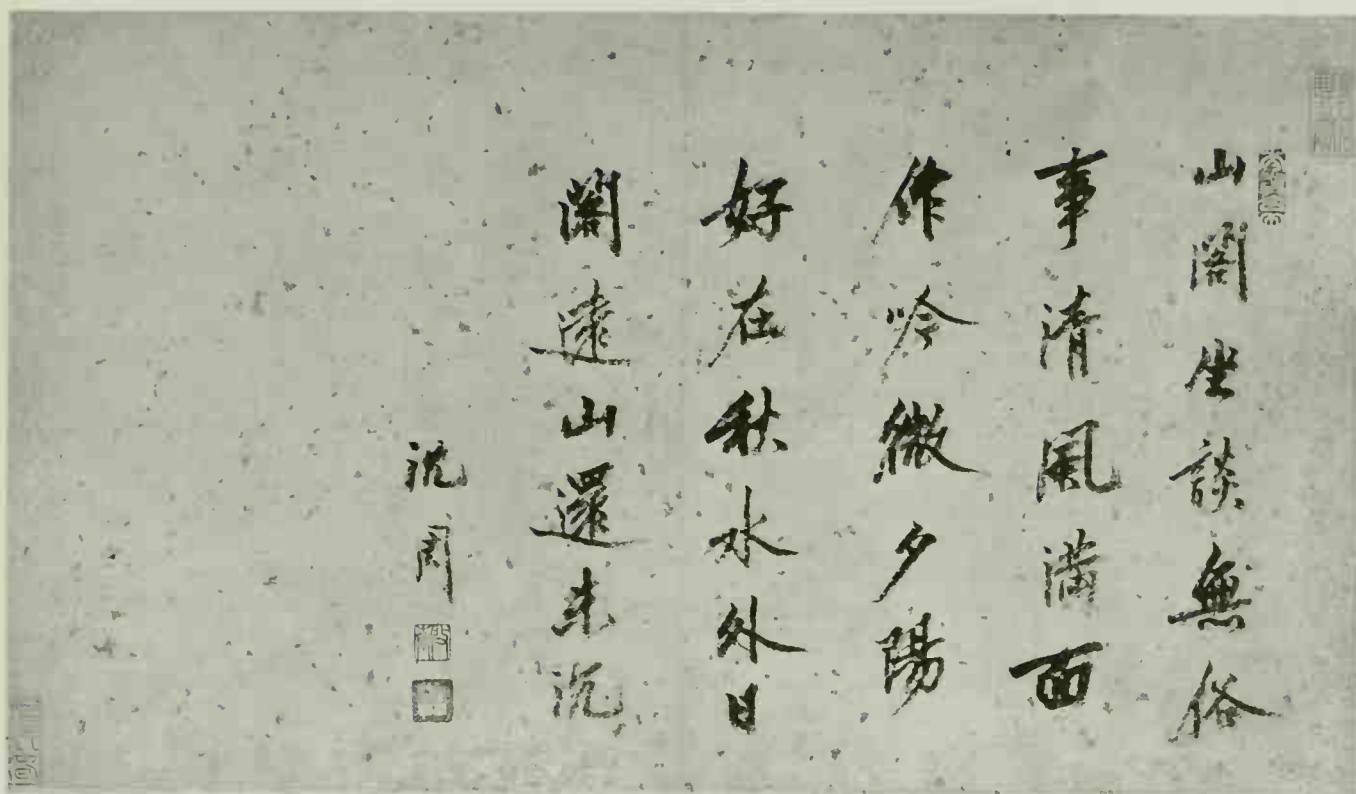
#### 40. Regular Script

Ming dynasty  
Album of Eight Landscapes and Eight Poems  
Shen Chou (1427-1509)  
Album leaves, ink on gold-flecked paper  
15" x 25 7/8" (each)  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Translations of the poems and descriptions of the paintings are published in Kojiro Tomita and Hsien-Chi Tseng, *Portfolio of Chinese Paintings in the Museum (Yüan to Ch'ing Periods)* (Boston, 1961, p. 10, pls. 36-51). No date appears on the album, but Richard Edwards dates it about 1477-79.

Shen Chou was also known as Ch'i-nan, Shih-t'ien, and by other names; after he was fifty-eight years old, he called himself Pai-shih-weng. A native of Suchow (Wu Hsien), he was the most beloved and influential artist of the Ming dynasty. His family was old and distinguished in the district, and for generations had kept the highest standards of scholarship. His art training began in his early years. Using the excuse of the old age of his mother, he never entered the official life, but remained at the family estate and devoted himself to the creation of art. He possessed the virtues of the ideal Chinese gentleman. He had an exceptional nature, was a generous friend, and encouraged younger artists. Nearly every learned scholar in the Wu region claimed to have been his student in one way or another. Every mention of him was regarded with reverence (*see* no. 43).

Shen Chou was highly productive and his paintings are now in almost every museum displaying Chinese art. He never boasted about his own calligraphy, and large calligraphic works by him are rare. His student Wen Cheng-ming (nos. 48-51), on the other hand, did produce large-scale writing on hanging scrolls. Shen Chou, however, often inscribed his own paintings with poems and lengthy comments. His calligraphy is strongly influenced by the Sung artist Huang T'ing-chien (no. 21). It retained a homogeneous style, showing little change throughout his long active life.



40 (album leaf)

The calligraphy on this leaf reads:

At ease we talk in this mountain abode, free from worldly thoughts,  
Soft singing, the gentle wind fans our faces;  
The evening glow lies beyond the autumn stream  
As the sun lingers on the distant mountain ere it sets.

(Translation from Kojiro Tomita and Hsien-Chi Tseng, *Portfolio of Chinese Paintings in the Museum (Yüan to Ch'ing Periods)*, Boston, 1961, p. 10, pl. 38)



#### 41. Regular Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Shen Chou (1427-1509)

1493

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold-flecked paper

6½" x 18½"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The text reads:

Usually when I go to the city, I'm bored by the long trip,  
Sitting all alone in my little boat.  
But now you are here to share wine with me and talk,  
And I feel happy enough to play the flute.  
White water chestnuts are blooming in random patterns;  
Red maple leaves are fading slowly.  
Soon, the pagoda sparkles in the distance,  
And we row ourselves in on the tides of the Han.

The dedication follows:

Han-wen hadn't visited me for a long time. Finally, on the sixteenth day of the month, we were able to get together. At the time, I was in my boat getting ready to leave. Since Han-wen was also planning to leave the city, he came along with me toward the south. My house is fifty *li* from the city. I usually make the trip alone, and find that except for flipping through a book, there's nothing to do but sleep. But this time we boiled crabs and water chestnuts, and I shared some wine with Han-wen. We also had a delightful conversation. Before we realized it, the boat had arrived. The city walls could still be made out in the distance. I have written this on a fan to record our lucky meeting. Shen Chou, 1493.

*Translation by Jonathan Chaves*

It has no artist's seal, but shows two collectors' seals.



## 42. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty

"Song of the Fisherman" (*Yü-fu tz'u*)

Ch'en Hsien-chang (1428-1500)

Hanging scroll, ink on paper

49<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" x 20<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub>"

Center of Asian Art and Culture, The Avery Brundage Collection,  
San Francisco

This poem, of irregular meter, is referred to as the "Song of the Fisherman." It may be translated:

Rains withdraw from the blue hills, the wild pigeon appears unearthly.  
Facing the pine flowers, I sit in the clear evening.  
Flowers are intoxicated by the wind, and the birds from the flowers.  
Under the bamboo, they utter two, three sounds.

Ch'en Hsien-chang signed "Pai-sha," and applied a seal below reading, "Shih-chai." This poem is not included in published collections of Ch'en Hsien-chang's poetry.

Ch'en Hsien-chang was popularly known as Master Pai-sha and also as Shih-chai and Kung-fu. He was a native of Hsin-hui (Kuangtung Province). The leading philosopher of the early Ming dynasty, he followed the direction of the Ch'eng and Chu Neo-Confucian schools of thought (eleventh-twelfth century). His theory was to ascertain by "contemplative sitting" the nobler part of one's inner self, and to achieve a unity within. He passed the prefectural civil examination once but was not lucky afterward in the provincial tests. After failing them twice, he gave up, and spent his life teaching in his home town, attracting many followers. As his reputation reached the capital, sometime after 1467, he was awarded the rank of Fellow of the Academy by Emperor Hsien-tsung (r. 1465-1487).

Because he lived far from the marketplace, he was often out of brushes, and began to tie weeds together and make brushes himself. His weed-brush writing became highly admired, and was accordingly valued. Ch'en Hsien-chang was at his best in the cursive style written with the weed brush. It is as unconventional as he himself was. His dramatic letters, large and small, show a certain clumsiness, but are inspired in the freedom of their movement. Looking at his energetic calligraphy, one would hardly imagine that he promoted "contemplative sitting." His work has something in common with the spirit of the twelfth century Ch'an (Zen) masters, as in the paintings of Mu-ch'i and Liang K'ai, provocative and executed with lightning speed.

In the Sung and Yüan dynasties, most calligraphy was done in comparatively small format. Not until the fourteenth century did large-scale hanging scrolls begin to appear more frequently. By then calligraphy scrolls seem to have become used as decorative objects like paintings.





### 43. Running and Cursive Scripts

Ming dynasty

Four Colophons

Wu K'uan (1435-1504), Wen P'eng (1498-1573), Wang Ku-hsiang (1501-1568), and P'eng Nien (1505-1566)

Handscroll, ink on paper

Portland Art Museum, Oregon

These four colophons follow the painting, "Landscape Panorama," by Shen Chou (see nos. 40, 41), dated 1477.

#### A. Running Script

Wu K'uan (1435-1504)

13" x 11½"

In our district, Master Shen Chou is the most eminent person. His brush technique is mature and the spirit of his ink is splashing. His landscape is composed with moving mists and clouds. Since Huang Tzu-chiu [Kung-wang, 1269-1354] nobody has been his equal. This painting is the precious possession of my friend Shih Ming-ku. I borrowed the painting, and it is [now] in Pao-ch'ing-ko [Wu K'uan's home], where I am able to study it to my heart's content. It is like entering into a real landscape. The eye hardly ever beholds so rich a view. This is by a masterly hand. [I] hereby write these words and return it [to the owner]. Yen-ling, Wu K'uan.

Wu K'uan attained the top national graduation examination honor (*chuang-yüan*) in the year 1472. He served three Ming imperial courts, and his final position was that of the Minister of Rites. A scholar-official of first rank in the fields of history, literature, and art, he, too, came from the Wu School. He kept in close contact and warm friendship with Shen Chou and many other freelance artists in his home region. Because of his literary accomplishments, his calligraphy commanded considerable respect. He was much influenced by Su Shih (1036-1101).

#### B. Cursive Script

Wen P'eng (1498-1573)

13" x 9½"

Master Ch'i-nan [Shen Chou] is a person of elevated and uncommon taste. Look at his painting—his brush movements are there like a sweeping sword. There is no equal to him. San-ch'iao, Wen P'eng wrote this in T'ing-yün-kuan.

Wen P'eng was also known as San-ch'iao and Shou-ch'eng. He was the elder son of Wen Cheng-ming (nos. 48-51), and active as an artist, being particularly noted for his seal engraving. The reputation of his calligraphy suffers from his being the son of a great master, and he has not received the credit that he deserves. More than twenty members of the Wen family carried on the art tradition, and Wen P'eng was the best in calligraphy and seal art. This writing is one of the finest examples of his work.

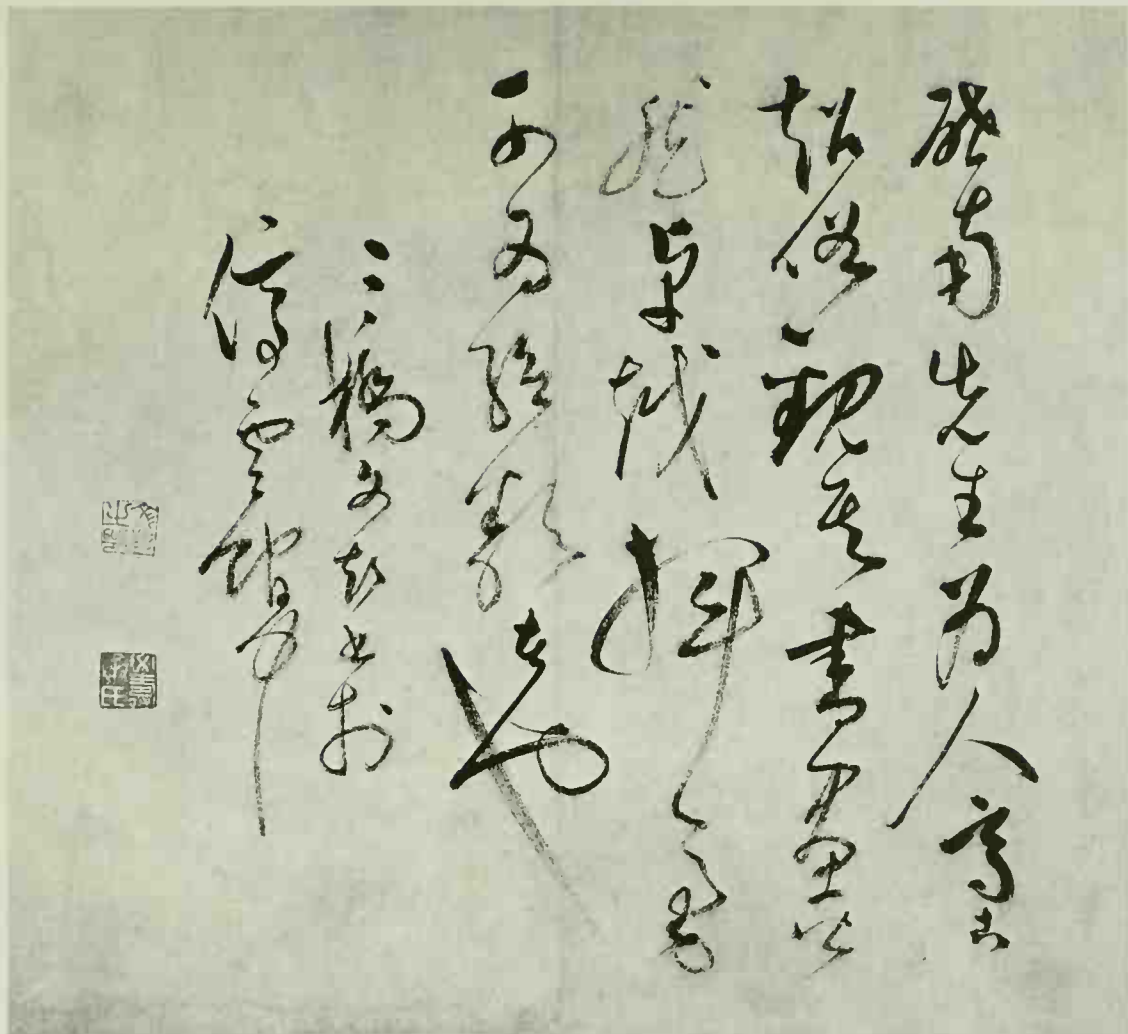
#### C. Running Script

Wang Ku-hsiang (1501-1568; see also no. 54)

1536

13" x 6½"

Between the period of 1465 and 1505, the most outstanding person in the arts was Senior Master Shen [Shen Chou]. When he let his inspiration go, and painted as his mind desired, his painting emerged so naturally that it seems never to have



43 B

been touched by man, its crystal clarity penetrating deep. His painting represents his personality. Yu-shih, Wang Ku-hsiang wrote this in the Autumn of 1536.

Wang Ku-hsiang, also called Yu-shih, was another outstanding scholar-painter of his time in the Wu region. He painted only monochrome-ink flower subjects. His rocks with narcissuses and orchids are most noteworthy.

#### D. Running Script

P'eng Nien (1505-1566)

13" x 6"

The superior man is truly remarkable in conveying his ideas.

For even a foot of his landscape painting,

An entire day spent by a window in leisurely study

Could not exhaust its meaning and flavor.

Lung-ch'ih shan-ch'iao, P'eng Nien.

*Translation by W. Allyn Rickett*

P'eng Nien, also known as Lung-ch'ih shan-ch'iao, was a poet and admirer of the painters of the Wu School. His name frequently appears on their works.



#### 44. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Wang Ao (1450-1524)

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold-patterned paper

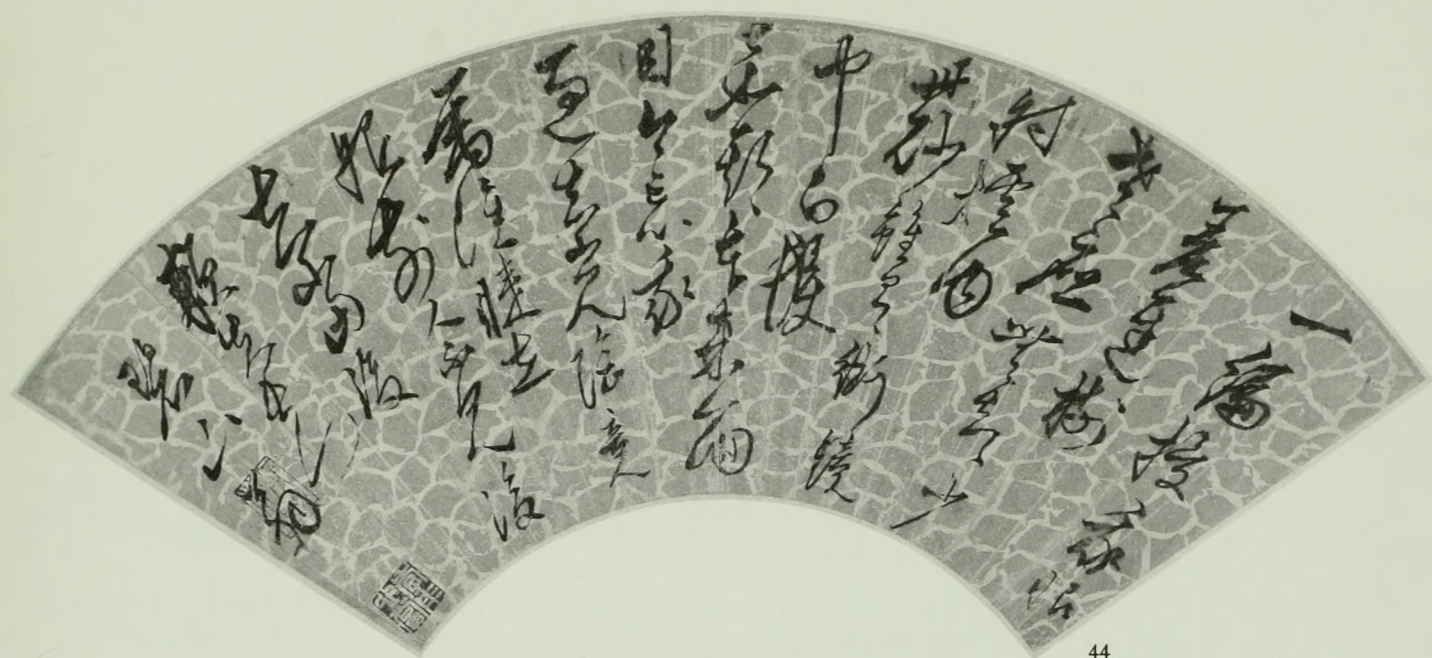
6¾" x 19¾"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

This is a poem on the passing of time and the inevitability of old age. It is dedicated to Mr. Lai and signed with the artist's pen name, "Pi-shan-weng." His seal, "Chi-chih," is impressed on the last word. Below, is the seal of the collector P'an Cheng-wei (1791-1850).

Wang Ao, also known as Chi-chih, came from Suchow in the Wu region. He passed the highest academic examination at the age of twenty-five, winning the third honor on the list. He went on to a political career, was respected and successful, and finally achieved the post of Grand Tutor.

Although his time was spent mostly in the capital, Peking, his heart was with his artist friends in Suchow. He was particularly devoted to Shen Chou (nos. 40, 41). His appreciative comments frequently appear on the paintings of the artists of the Wu School. However, he was more prolific in poetry than calligraphy, and his calligraphy shows an amateur's approach. It is lean and angular, and greatly influenced by the Sung artists. His instinct for art came directly from his background as an intellectual, and his sensitivity shows his great respect for art.



## 45. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty

"Prose-Poem on Fishing" attributed to Sung Yü (3rd century B.C.)

Chu Yün-ming (1460-1526)

1507

Handscroll, ink on gold-flecked paper

12  $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 26' 9  $\frac{1}{4}$ "

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The "Prose-Poem on Fishing" is attributed to Sung Yü (third century B.C.), but is probably a work of the late Han dynasty or the Six Dynasties. In archaic prose form, it is a parable relating how Sung Yü, taking fishing as a comparison, advised the King to "fish" by means of virtue, and thus gather all humanity into his kingdom. Chu Yün-ming concluded the text with:

On a Summer day in the year 1507, as I was in [Wu]-hsi [near Suchow], I visited Mr. Hua Shang-ku [Hua Ch'eng, 1438-1514] at the mansion of Lo Ts'an-lü. We relaxed in the "Pleasure Garden," enjoying the flowers and fishing, and before we knew it, the day had passed. Below a lamp, amidst the flowers, I took a worn brush and wrote the "Prose-Poem on Fishing" to commemorate the happiness of this occasion. Recorded by Chu Yün-ming, holder of the provincial degree from Ch'ang-chou and of the *chin-shih* degree.

*Translation by Jonathan Chaves*

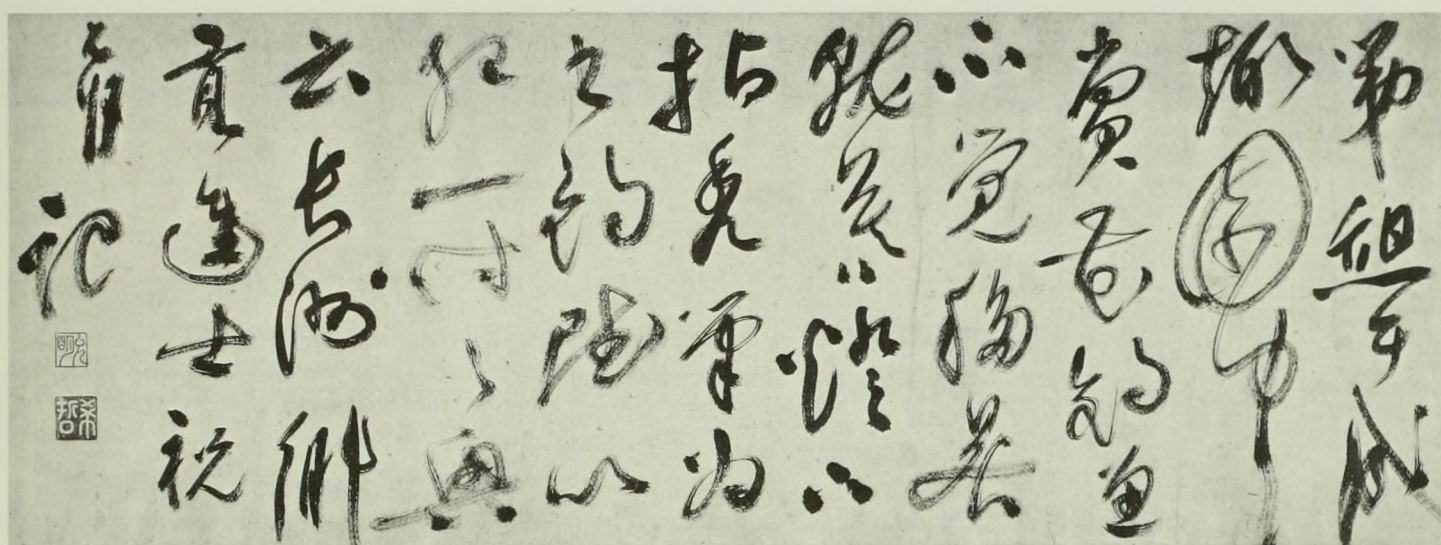
Below the last character are two of the artist's seals reading, "Yün-ming" and "Hsi-che."

Chu Yün-ming, also known as Hsi-che, Chih-shan, and Chih-chih-sheng (meaning "An Extra Finger," which he is said to have had on one hand), grew up in the literary atmosphere of the Wu region. He passed the provincial examinations, served a short term as Mayor in a small town, and then became Assistant Prefect at the Prefecture of Ying-t'ien. Preferring the artist's life, he retired from his official career and returned to his home town.

As a calligrapher, Chu Yün-ming began by following the regular styles of Chung Yao (no. 8), Wang Hsi-chih (no. 10 A, C, D), and the T'ang masters. Then he proceeded to the wild cursive style of Chang Hsü (no. 15), and the Monk Huai-su (no. 17). He utilized all of the classical devices in writing. As if without thinking, he wrote with the dash and the impulse of a child, an attitude that is decisively representative of his uninhibited bohemian life. Together with his good friend, the painter T'ang Yin (1470-1523), he wandered about the scenic spots, enjoying song and wine in the sophisticated city of Suchow. He is rated as the best calligrapher of the Ming dynasty.

This wild cursive script is one of the best examples of the calligraphy of Chu Yün-ming. It may be equated with the work of those earlier masters, Huang T'ing-chien (no. 21), Huai-su, and Chang Hsü, and shows he was the rightful heir to the tradition of the wild cursive script.





45 (detail, end of scroll)



46 (detail)

#### 46. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Chu Yün-ming (1460-1526)

1519

Handscroll, ink on paper

18" x 52'  $\frac{3}{8}$ "

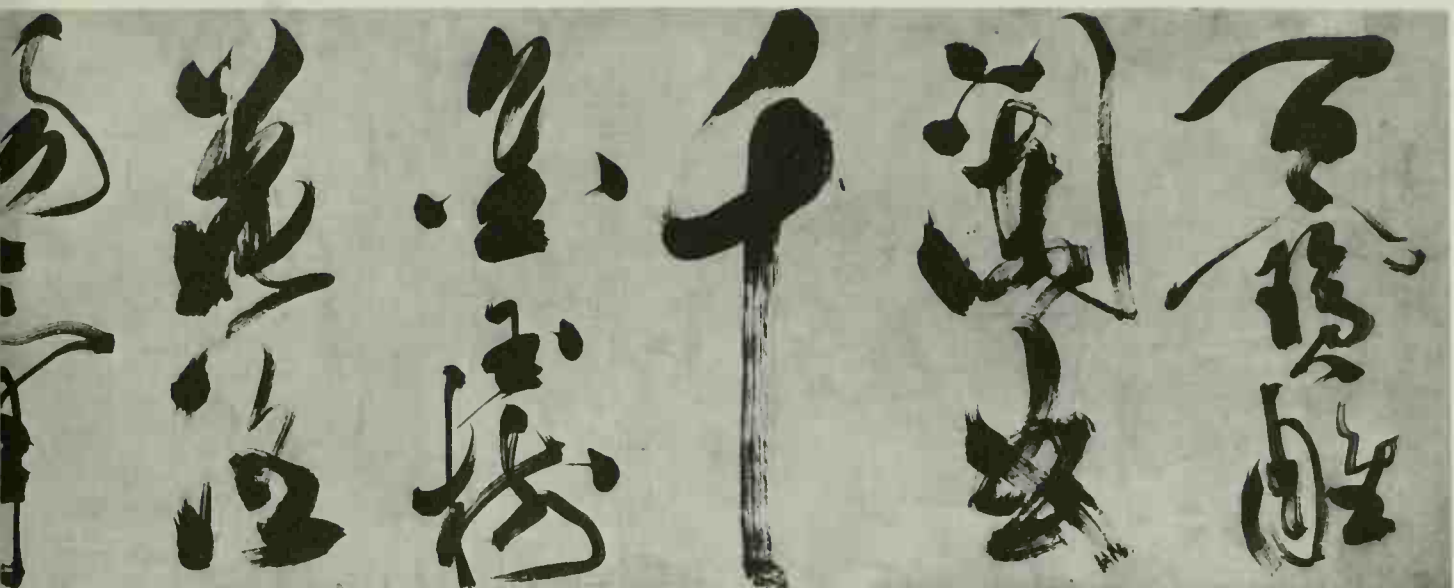
The Art Museum, Princeton University

It is not known if this poem on eight different flowers was composed by the artist or was written in an earlier period. The first four lines serve as an overture, setting the scene of the arrival of Spring in Lo-yang, the ancient capital of the T'ang dynasty, noted for its gardens and flowers. Each flower is then named in order of the seasons. It reads:

Carved corridors, decorated in a hundred ways  
Wind beneath trees bursting with a thousand jadelike blossoms.  
The scene is Lo-yang in the Spring  
Everywhere flowers in splendor vying.

Peach blossoms fall like red rain  
Petal on petal covering the green moss.  
Little wild birds imbued with love feelings  
Fly in contest beneath the trees.

On days when apricot blossoms unfold  
Purple swallows fly back and forth.  
In the Spring air handsome young men  
Brocade-clad, ride by on horseback.



On days when plantain lilies bloom  
The Spring breeze scents the courtyard full.  
In color one with moon's bright light  
What sweeter way to wake from wine-drugged sleep.

Pomegranates ripe with seeds  
Grow near the neighbor's wall.  
From last night's poetry, throat still hoarse,  
Returning, we try a taste.

Dew-drenched blossoms cool in Autumn air  
Hibiscus cluster in brocade-like beauty.  
Avoiding competition with other plants  
They elegantly bend over the Autumn stream.

Chrysanthemums grow beside the eastern fence  
Idle there yet eyes still bright with movement.  
The golden color at my waist and those flower buds  
Compete in yellowness of hue.

Blossomed plum trees cast scattered shadows across the window  
Their beauty a companion to the brightness of the moon.  
The cry of a wild crane flying  
Shatters the soul in dream.

Bamboo straight and loyal, a minister chaste  
A single, lofty gentleman,  
Uniform in color through all four seasons  
Undaunted by frost or snow.

*Translation by Adele Rickett*





46 (detail, showing artist's signature and seals)

It is signed, "Chih-shan, Yün-ming wrote [this] in the [studio] Ssu-wang-hsüan. It is the Spring of 1519." Two seals of the artist are impressed on his name, "Yün-ming."

Chu Yün-ming wrote this at the age of fifty-nine. It is in a manner much freer than that of the "Prose-Poem on Fishing" (no. 45), written twelve years earlier. He was well known for his love of wine and flirtation and his enjoyment of excitement and laughter. His romantic and impulsive inspiration may be readily seen in this writing, which reflects his personality.

This is the foremost example of his work representing the exuberance of his later period. The force and power of this dashing work need little comment. It permits comparisons with Western action painting. The revelation of the psyche, the existential execution, and the romantic self-indulgences are so evident in Chu Yün-ming's work that it may easily be interpreted on the same level as a painting by De Kooning or Pollock. However, Chu Yün-ming was apparently less serious about himself than contemporary Western artists.



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## 47. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Chu Yün-ming (1460-1526)

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold paper

7½" x 19½"

The Art Institute of Chicago, S. M. Nickerson Collection

This fan bears the artist's signature "Chih-shan" and one of his seals.

Chu Yün-ming's maternal grandfather was Hsü Yu-ch'en (act. fifteenth century) and his father-in-law was Li Ying-ch'en (act. 1453-1495), both highly respected calligraphers. Chu Yün-ming was a child prodigy. It was said that at the age of five he was able to write characters larger than one foot. His art developed early and effortlessly. The art critic Wang Shih-ch'en (1526-1590) compared his art to that of Chao Meng-fu (nos. 30, 31). He considered Chu Yün-ming's to be more archaic, and thus superior. The calligraphy of Chu Yün-ming, whose cursive script obviously represents the heritage of the T'ang dynasty, is actually closer to the Sung masters, especially to the styles of Huang T'ing-chien (no. 21) and Mi Fu (no. 22). His folding and twisting brush tips are painterly. His art is stronger and more daring than that of the school of Wang Hsi-chih and its followers down to the time of Chao Meng-fu. It has a steadiness that belongs to the stone-engraving tradition.

## 48. Regular Script

Ming dynasty

Couplet

Wen Cheng-ming (1470-1559)

Pair of hanging scrolls, ink on metal-flecked paper

61 1/4" x 12" (each)

Wango H. C. Weng Collection, New York

The couplet concerns ceremonial ritual:

Offering seasoned meat follows the rites of the Chou dynasty.

Giving banquets [for scholars] is the custom of the Han dynasty.

It is signed "Cheng-ming" followed by two of the artist's seals.

Wen Cheng-ming's personal name was originally Pi, and he was also known as Cheng-chung; however, he used the signature "Cheng-ming" on most of his works. His other favorite name, Heng-shan, was on a seal often accompanied by his signature. His father Wen Lin (1445-1499) was a great patron of the arts, and his home became a center for leading scholars and artists. Wen Cheng-ming studied the art of painting with Shen Chou (nos. 40, 41), a close friend of his father. He had been brought up in a stern Confucian tradition, and was introspective by nature. In his early years, compared with the gifted circle around him, he developed slowly and was a poor calligrapher. But, determined and dedicated, he practiced day and night, and not only mastered the arts of calligraphy and painting, but became one of the leading Four Masters of the Ming dynasty. He greatly admired Chao Meng-fu (nos. 30, 31), believing in a systematic approach to creativity. He read widely, observing and investigating many other fields of art. Beside his achievements in literature, painting, and calligraphy, he was also a master of seal engraving (see fig. 19a). He supervised the engraving on stone of a large series of classical calligraphy, *T'ing-yün-kuan t'ieh*, which included some of the finest reproductions as rubbings of the calligraphy of all periods. What his friends respected in him most was his standard of the Confucian gentleman. The conduct of his life was so admirable that it was rated above his artistic talents. Like Shen Chou, he was kind and helpful to the younger generation. Many of his students became prominent and remembered him fondly.

Wen Cheng-ming wrote in several styles, and within his own range, he also had several modes of practice. His small regular script closely follows that of the Chin and T'ang styles (no. 10A, C-H). His large regular script shows the strong influence of Huang T'ing-chien (no. 21). This may have been the result of his close association with Shen Chou, whose writing directly followed the school of Huang T'ing-chien. This couplet is typical of his large regular script. The lines are sharp and straightforward in the manner of stele engravings. The long strokes, standing out like oars, show the manner of Huang T'ing-chien. The paper he used was highly sized, and therefore the ink appears glossy.

The writing of couplets did not become popular until the Ch'ing dynasty. Ch'en Hsien-chang (no. 42) and Wen Cheng-ming were among the few artists to do them in the Ming dynasty.



薦蜡還存周典禮

賜酺耶舉漢官儀

漢明

#### 49. Regular Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Wen Cheng-ming (1470-1559)

Hanging scroll, ink on paper

11' 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 48 $\frac{1}{4}$ "

The Art Museum, Princeton University

The poem, filled with Taoist symbolism and references to earlier poetry of the Han and T'ang dynasties, was probably written for a Taoist temple. It is signed, "Cheng-ming," and two of the artist's seals are impressed below. This type of symbolic poetry is generally referred to as the style of the Hsi-k'un School, a group of Sung poets who gathered and inspired each other to achieve a very sophisticated style. Their poetry was laden with symbols, with double and triple literary references. Huang T'ing-chien (no. 21) was an active member of the group.

Once again, Wen Cheng-ming demonstrates how much he was under the influence of the art of Huang T'ing-chien. Not only does the calligraphy show the stressed "oar strokes" so typical of Huang T'ing-chien, but also the poetry is in his manner.

決瀋滄池混太清芙蓉十里錦雲平曾聞  
樂府歌黃鵠還見秋風動石鯨玉鍊鯉  
垂碧落銀山縹緲自寰瀛從知鳳輦  
經遊地  
鳬雁回翔捲不驚

徵明



49 (detail)



## 50. Seal Script

Ming dynasty

Taoist Scripture (*Huang t'ing ching*)

Wen Cheng-ming (1470–1559)

1558

Handscroll, ink on paper

9 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 31"

Wango H. C. Weng Collection, New York

At the end of the writing, Wen Cheng-ming gave the date of the scripture as 356, and of his own writing as 1558. He signed the scroll, "Heng-shan, Cheng-ming," and impressed two seals, "Wen Cheng-ming yin" and "Heng-shan." Sixteen collectors' seals are also shown, including those of Wang Ku-hsiang (no. 54), Chu Chih-ch'ih (sixteenth century), and Wen Cheng-ming's descendant, Wen Ting (1766–1852).

Wen Cheng-ming preferred to write in running, official, and regular scripts; his seal script is not often seen. Wang Shih-chen (1526–1590) knew his work well and commented on it:

Cheng-chung's small regular script is superb and most celebrated, and he was very proud of his official script; as for his seal script [in which he had the least confidence], it is rarely seen, but he is competent at it. . . . He once wrote the "Essay of a Thousand Characters" in four different scripts. It demonstrates his small regular script as particularly exquisite, like that of *Huang t'ing ching* [the "classic" of small regular script by Wang Hsi-chih, no. 10D]. His running script is moist and mature. He inherited the essence of *Sheng-chiao hsü* [an essay by the T'ang Emperor T'ai-tsung engraved in characters assembled from Wang Hsi-chih's various writings in running script]. His official script, too, shows the depth of his contemplation and realization. His seal script is adequate, in the manner of Li Yang-ping [late eighth century]. . . . However, he never let himself loose in the cursive manner [He never produced wild cursive script].

This is one of the rare examples of Wen Cheng-ming's seal script. It shows his earnestness and his attentive nature. Wen Cheng-ming was most assiduous in his daily habits. He practiced writing every day, until he was ninety. It is said that one morning, having finished his daily practice of the small regular script, he laid down his brush and died with a faint smile on his face.

永和十二年五月廿四日五山陰縣寫  
嘉靖三十七年丙午十五歲出



## 51. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Wen Cheng-ming (1470-1559)

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold paper

6 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 19 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The moisture has dried on the roof tiles; the sun is rising.

A halo of green mist hovers over the moss.

Thick greenery brings in the Summer;

High tides have flooded the broken bridge.

The waters are rising, but I'm feeling fine —

Sudden sunlight makes me change to lighter clothes.

I awake from my sleep in the western studio, with nothing to do.

Now and then, hidden birds break the silence.

*Translation by Jonathan Chaves*

The poem is signed "Cheng-ming"; two of the artist's seals follow.





## 52. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty

"A Reasoning on Ideal Happiness" (*Lo chih lun*) by

Chung Ch'ang-t'ung (A.D. 179-219)

Ch'en Shun (1483-1544)

1539

Handscroll, ink on paper

13½" x 21' 10½"

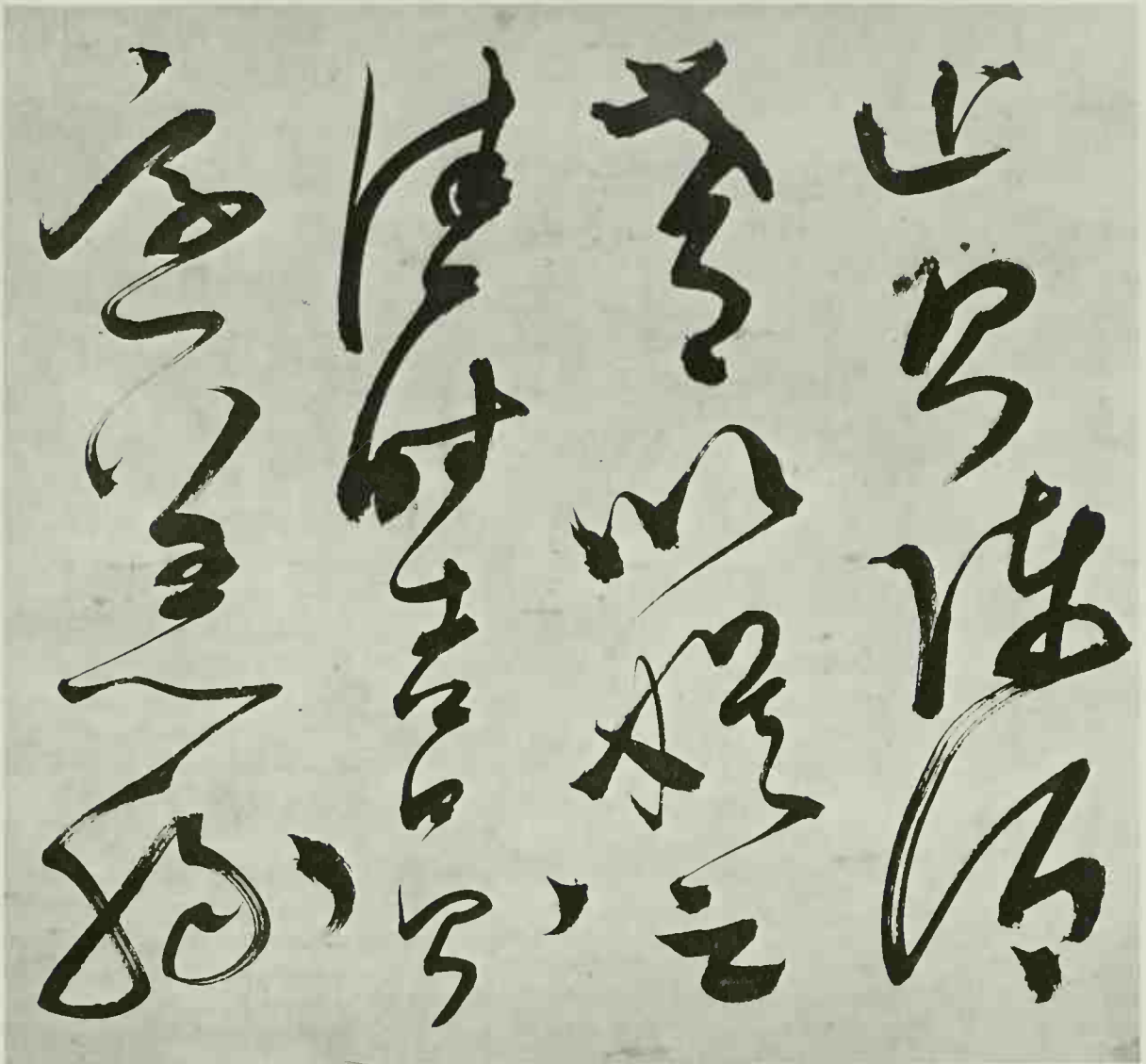
Honolulu Academy of Arts, Given by friends in memory of

Mrs. A. E. Steadman, 1960

The essay, "A Reasoning on Ideal Happiness," is about the pleasures of living at one with nature, with no desire for striving in the lusty world. At the end of the writing is the date 1539 and the signature, "Written in the Hao-ko Pavilion, Ch'en Tao-fu." Two artist's seals are included, "Ch'en Tao-fu" and "Po-yang shan-jen."

Ch'en Shun, also named Tao-fu and Po-yang, was another distinguished member of the Wu School at Suchow. He came from a modest family and was a student of Wen Cheng-ming (nos. 48-51), who helped him in his younger years. He was a quiet man, contented with the life of an artist, and never pursued fame or wealth. Wen Cheng-ming wrote several poems remembering their friendship at a time when Ch'en Shun was away. On one occasion, Wen Cheng-ming was asked if Ch'en Shun had been his student. Wen Cheng-ming smiled and said: "I was his first teacher. He has his own way with painting and calligraphy. He is no longer my student."

Ch'en Shun's calligraphy is like his painting, moving elegantly, galloping like a thoroughbred horse, distinguished and free. His color and ink are replete with natural lyricism. His inspiration has in it elements of the art of Mi Fu (no. 22) or of Yang Ning-shih (873-954), but it has originality, refreshing as brilliant flowers and clear as the Autumn moon. This handscroll is a masterpiece, a brilliant example of his work.



52 (detail)





53

### 53. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Hsü Lin (1490-1548)

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold-flecked paper  
6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" x 19"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The text of the poem reads:

Rain on the laurel blossoms —  
I lean on the balustrade as Spring ends.  
I am a traveler —north, south, east, west;  
When will I get to see them again?  
Jade colors offset by a brown collar,  
How can they last through the evening cold?  
So many trees here in this garden;  
It is hard to put them in a poem.

*Translation by Jonathan Chaves*

It is signed "Jan-hsien" with a seal.

The dates of Hsü Lin's birth and death are recorded differently in several sources. His other names are Jan-hsien and Chiu-feng. He was a native of Suchow, active at the time of Wen Cheng-ming (nos. 48-51) and Chu Yün-ming (nos. 45-47). His calligraphy was highly regarded by his fellow artists. He painted flower subjects in ink, and also mastered the art of seal engraving and was noted for his seal script. His running script, as shown here, is in the tradition of Wang Hsi-chih (no. 108).



54

## 54. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Wang Ku-hsiang (1501-1568; see also no. 43C)

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold paper

6 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 18 $\frac{5}{8}$ "

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

A light Spring fog spreads through the city —  
 The ice breaks up, the green water glistens.  
 Ten thousand roofs cluster in the sky;  
 Birds chirp in the early sunlight.  
 I am heavy with thoughts of one I love;  
 Homesickness follows me as I travel.  
 Everywhere I look, in all four directions,  
 Horses and carriages dash along the roads.  
 In the reeds, where Taoist immortals  
 Must once have tied their boats,  
 Morning waves rise.  
 Light mist floats through the willows;  
 Orioles sing in the drizzling rain.  
 My heart is far away —  
 I'm thinking of a hand I want to hold.  
 But now the wine cup is empty.  
 I must set out again through the fragrant flowers.

*Translation by Jonathan Chaves*

Following the signature "Yu-shih, Wang Ku-hsiang" is the artist's seal.

## 55. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Hai Jui (1514-1587)

Hanging scroll, ink on paper

82 7/8" x 20"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The text is a poem of seventeen characters:

Spring pool, deep and wide,  
Waiting for the light boat to circle around.  
The dense floating water mosses  
Swept aside by the branches of weeping willow.

The artist did not sign this, but two of his seals are impressed below, "Hai Jui" and "Kang-feng." This is a rare writing by a little-known name in calligraphy. His conviction in life was to be firm and strongheaded, therefore he named himself Kang-feng ("The Hard Peak").

Hai Jui was a native of Hainan (Kwangtung Province). He held many official posts and was a fearless statesman, with great social conscience. He fought for and helped the poor at every turn, and his attempts at reform led twice to his disgrace. He himself died impoverished. Quite different from the statesmen of the T'ang and Sung dynasties, whose writings reveal their firm personalities, Hai Jui's calligraphy is rather delicate, if not feminine. He had a reputation as a poet. This poem, about a garden in Spring, also shows a mood unrelated to his violent political life. It is unlikely that he spent years of training as an artist. His personality was admired and thus his writing was often requested. Although he was older than Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (nos. 60-62), his writing is surprisingly close to Tung's in feeling, but it has more grace than power.



東池深且廣  
會待經丹旦  
康

孫祥合垂楊  
掃——以再



## 56. Regular Script

Ming dynasty

"Peach Blossom, with Introductory Note" by P'i Jih-hsiu (d. 880)

Chou T'ien-ch'iu (1514-1595)

1538

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold paper

7 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ "

Honolulu Academy of Arts, Gift of Mrs. Walter J. Dillingham, 1958

The writing of this prose-poem bears the date 1538, late Summer, and is signed, "With reverence, written for Abbot Pei-ch'an, Chou T'ien-ch'iu." Chou T'ien-ch'iu was another scholar-painter, a cultivated member of the Wu School, active in Suchow. A student of Wen Cheng-ming, he was less productive than other artists of his time. He painted orchid and flower subjects only occasionally. This tiny regular script is the size of a "fly's head," and follows the mainstream of classical calligraphy as evolved during the Chin and T'ang dynasties (nos. 10A, C-H). Exquisitely handled by Wen Cheng-ming (nos. 48, 49), it is shown here to have been mastered by Chou T'ien-ch'iu.

扇面書法，內容為《世說新語》卷之八《容止》篇，文字為：「晉書：王戎年七歲，嘗與群兒戲道側，李樹多實，戎獨不往。問之，戎曰：『恐其苦甜。』」



## 57. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Hsü Wei (1521–1593)

Handscroll, ink on paper

12½" x 20' ¼"

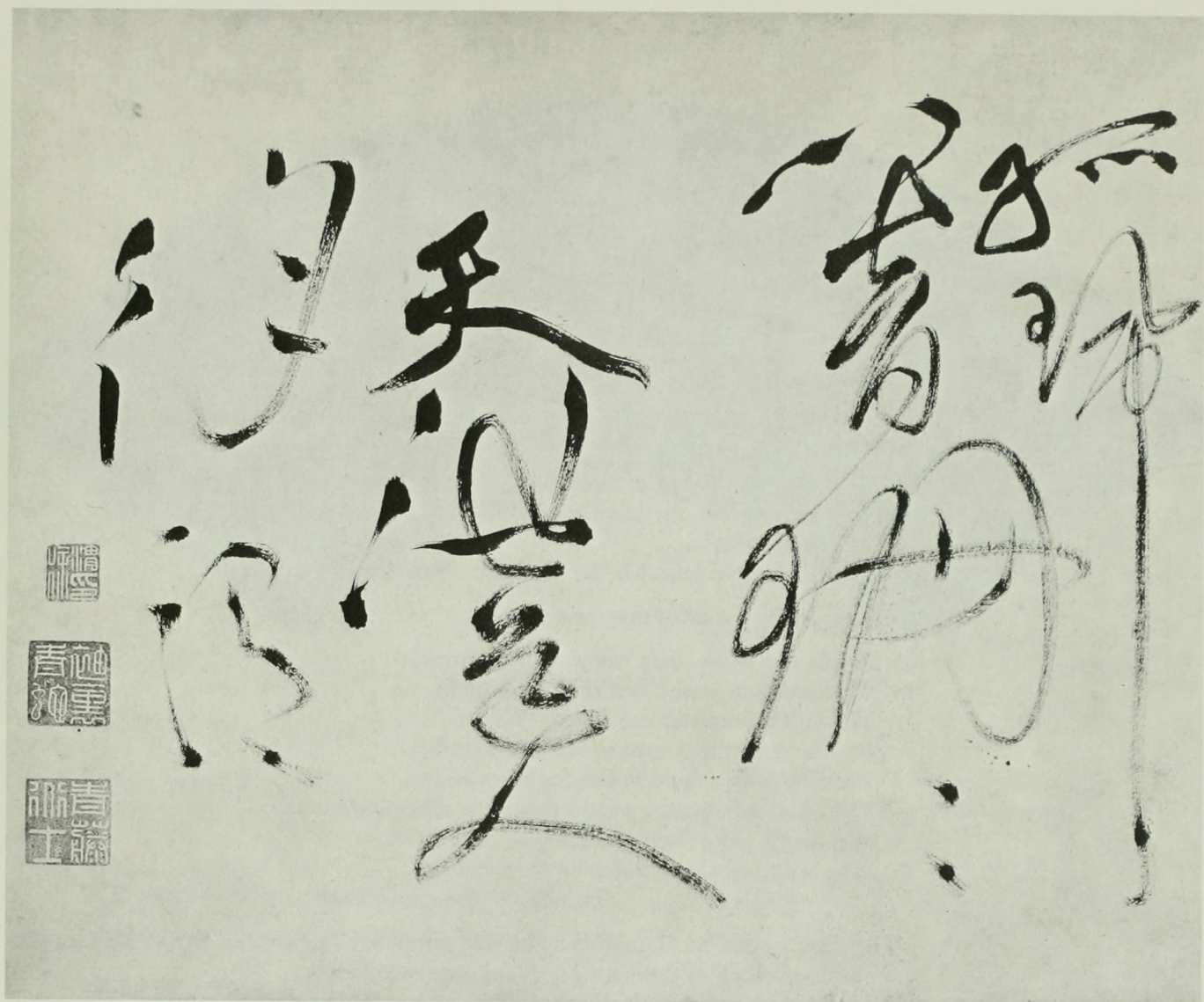
Wango H. C. Weng Collection, New York

This poem, dedicated to a gallant young man by the name of Wang, is not included in published collections of Hsü Wei's poetry. It is signed, "T'ien-ch'ih Tao-jen, Hsü Wei," and three of the artist's seals are impressed beside it.

Hsü Wei was also known as Wen-ch'ang, Wen-ch'ing, Ch'ing-t'eng, T'ien-ch'ih, and by several other names. A man of genius, he was never recognized in his lifetime. He was tortured by schizophrenia after the age of forty-five, and led a weird and haunted life until his death at seventy-two. Rated by Yüan Hung-tao (1568–1610) as the greatest literary talent of the Ming dynasty—his writings on drama are considered particularly valuable contributions—he was equally well known as a painter.

According to his own claim, among all the arts he mastered, his greatest talent was in calligraphy. After that, he rated his poetry next and then his essays, and only finally his painting. Yet painting was his greatest achievement from today's point of view. Hsü Wei's painting (*see* fig. 12) followed closely that of Ch'en Shun (no. 52). He painted only in monochrome ink. His calligraphy, too, shows an outward kinship to Ch'en Shun's. But Hsü Wei's work has a nervous compulsion, showing a man without inner control. The excessive energy he was unable to expend in his life, he was able to express in his art.

This calligraphy is a perfect example of his work, showing his unchained force. The description of the "delirious cursive script" of the T'ang calligrapher Chang Hsü (no. 15) as "powerful as a storm, and as frenzied" would be better suited to capture the spirit of the writing of Hsü Wei.



57 (detail, end of scroll)

## 58. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Mo Yün-ch'ing (d. 1582)

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold paper

6" x 19 $\frac{1}{16}$ "

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

This poem by the artist may be translated:

Purple and white, they flaunt their freshness,  
Blossoming in season as if they were gods.  
They fill the trees of the Golden Valley,  
Prouder than the beauty in her jade chamber.  
Their light dew floats in our Spring wine;  
Their heavy fragrance weighs down the dancing dust.  
Wu-ling is before our eyes today—  
No need to get lost "searching for the way."

*Translation by Jonathan Chaves*

The artist signed it: "Under the flowers, composed and written for Te-ch'üan, Mo Shih-lung." Two of the artist's seals are impressed below.

Mo Yün-ch'ing was also known as Shih-lung, Ch'iu-shui, Hou-ming, T'ing-han, Pi-shan-weng, and by a few more pen names. He was a native of Hua-t'ing (Kiangsu Province). At one time, he studied under a government scholarship and earned the rank of *kung-sheng*, but he was never again involved with the official world. A painter, poet, and a superb connoisseur of painting, he had brilliant literary talents that won him many friends. Among them were Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (nos. 60–62) and Ch'en Chi-ju (no. 63), who both hailed him in their writings. An essay entitled *Hua shuo* ("Notes on Painting"), attributed both to Mo Yün-ch'ing and to Tung Ch'i-ch'ang, has been a puzzle for centuries. (Recently it has again become the topic of discussion. At the International Conference on Chinese Painting held in the National Palace Museum in Taiwan in the Summer of 1970, the topic was treated by both Nelson Wu of Washington University, St. Louis, and Fu Shen of the research staff of the National Palace Museum. Earlier it was studied by Wai-kam Ho of the Cleveland Museum of Art. Their conclusion was that the essay is by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang.) Mo Yün-ch'ing's calligraphy was influenced by Mi Fu (no. 22) and Su Shih (1036–1101), who had the type of artistic personality Mo and his friends Tung Ch'i-ch'ang and Ch'en Chi-ju emulated.



金滿堂  
 金蘭香  
 殺玉樹  
 樓人露  
 浮春薄  
 醪香濃  
 香露  
 在後  
 昭示  
 用  
 新泉  
 新泉

## 59. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Hsing T'ung (1551-1612)

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold paper  
6" x 19"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The poem, composed by the artist, reads:

Two carp leap from the green waves of T'ao River  
And bring a friendly letter from ten thousand miles away.  
You must be sad, standing on a sand bank near the Jade Pass of Kao-lan,  
Remembering Chin-ch'eng, as a barbarian flute plays in the Autumn wind.  
Red crab apples are piled in plates before the frost;  
Lambs are cooked in stews after the hunt.  
Our wise sovereign lets his robe hang loose, and doesn't worry about the  
west —  
He has already sent his strategy to Chao Ying-p'ing.

*Translation by Jonathan Chaves*

It is inscribed, "Poem on Lan-chou, sent to Inspector Ching, written by Hsing T'ung," and followed by one of the artist's seals.

Hsing T'ung, also known as Tzu-yüan, was a native of Lin-i (Shantung Province). At the age of twenty-two, he became the Magistrate of Nan-kung (Hopei Province). After serving in several other positions, he became Assistant President and Examiner of the Imperial Equipment at Shensi. At that time he was more than thirty. Feeling his aged parents needed his company, he retired from official life and returned to his wealthy family estate in Shantung, where he collected art and books. His reputation as a poet and calligrapher grew steadily. At his beautiful newly built studio on the Chi River, he received visitors who came from all parts of the empire. He became the leading figure of a literary circle. His calligraphy belongs to the tradition of Wang Hsi-chih (nos. 9, 10A-D). His name was often grouped with that of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (nos. 60-62) — "In the south there is Tung, in the north Hsing." Along with Chang Jui-t'u (nos. 64-66) and Mi Wan-chung (1570-1628), these artists are regarded as the Four Great Calligraphers of the late Ming dynasty.

晚清  
 寒窗  
 秋風  
 城  
 盤中  
 策  
 案外  
 羹  
 聖主  
 顧  
 已將  
 平  
 寄  
 作



## 60. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty

Poem by Wang Wei (699-759)

Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555-1636)

Hanging scroll, ink on paper

75" x 29<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The poem reads:

We bid each other farewell in the mountain,  
The sun was setting as I closed the bramble gate.  
The meadow is green every Spring . . .  
Is the young lord returning home?

It is signed, "Ch'i-ch'ang," with two of the artist's seals following.

Tung Ch'i-ch'ang used the names Hsüan-tsai, Hsiang-kuang, Ssu-pai, and others. He generally signed "Ch'i-ch'ang" on his writings and "Hsüan-tsai" on his paintings. His family was from Sung-chiang, near the present region of Shanghai. He was a brilliant scholar, a prominent official (Minister of the Board of Rites, and Grand Tutor), and an outstanding painter and calligrapher. Most of all, he had the keenest aesthetic sense and was the most knowledgeable connoisseur of his time. His approach to art has dominated Chinese artistic theory down to the present day. Tung Ch'i-ch'ang was creative as well in literary composition. His books and his sophisticated mind are well known to every Chinese art historian. He was counted as one of the Four Great Calligraphers of the late Ming dynasty, along with Hsing T'ung (no. 59), Chang Jui-t'u (nos. 64-66), and Mi Wan-chung (1570-1628).

Tung Ch'i-ch'ang owed his calligraphic style to Chao Meng-fu (nos. 30, 31) and Wen Cheng-ming (nos. 48-51), although it is ultimately based on the Chin and T'ang masters. Like these two artists, he was also conscientious and systematic in his approach to creativity, trying to "recapture antiquity" without being enslaved by it. He devoted himself to learning from the classical works, and he had no false modesty. He gave the following self-estimation:

My writing and that of Chao Meng-fu are different. As to the spatial arrangement, between lines and characters, in the unity of a thousand words within one writing, I cannot compete with him. But of the grasp of the ancient spirit, he has one-tenth, I have seven-tenths. His writing is overdone, to the point of vulgarity, while I preserve my gracious simplicity. My writing often is incidental, and gives in to my own instinct, which Chao Meng-fu is very much lacking. For there are rarely writers able to express their personal instincts.

It is true that whenever Tung Ch'i-ch'ang copied the works of an old master, his calligraphy never resembled the master's. He tried to understand the spirit, not repeat the outward likeness of the works. The enlightenment of the artist should be "felt" in the art work, but not exactly be in the product itself. Above and beyond the pictorial elements, the artist's perception and conception are counted and evaluated. The evocative context is often startling, the meaning profound. This he called "Ch'an art."

He wrote in many styles, at one time very precisely, at another time, casually. This poem is of the latter type. Compared to his fellow artist, Chang Jui-t'u, he did not display massive power. As he himself claimed, there is a "tremendous amount of grace."

山才亦送客日暮掩

荆元王子之孫王

孫留二歸

其官





61

## 61. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Passage from "Returning Home" by T'ao Ch'ien (365-427)

Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555-1636)

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold paper

6 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 19 $\frac{7}{8}$ "

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The text of this fan consists of a passage from one of the most famous poems in Chinese literature, "Returning Home" by T'ao Ch'ien (see no. 32). As translated by Lily Pao-hu Chang and Marjorie Sinclair (*The Poems of T'ao Ch'ien*, Honolulu, 1953, pp. 103-4), the verse reads:

When I see my doorway and house,  
I am happy, and I run.  
The servants welcome me,  
And small children wait by the gate.  
Though the three paths are weedy,  
The pines and chrysanthemums are still there.  
I hold my child and enter the room.  
The jar is full of wine;  
Helping myself, I empty it.  
Fondly I look at my favorite branch in the garden  
And gaze with pride from my southern window,  
Recognizing that in a tiny bit of space there is peace.  
I walk daily in the garden and pass by the stream.  
Though there is a gate, it is often closed.

Following the text are the words, "Poem by T'ao Ching-chieh [T'ao Ch'ien], Tung Ch'i-ch'ang."





## 62. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555-1636)

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold paper

6 $\frac{1}{16}$ " x 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

The Art Institute of Chicago, S. M. Nickerson Collection

This poem was most likely composed by the artist. His signature, "Ch'i-ch'ang," and his seal follow.

Tung Ch'i-ch'ang's work as a whole is delicate, more frail than archaic, more intimate than monumental. This is a typical example of his style. Once, speaking of his own training, he recounted:

When I began studying calligraphy at the age of seventeen, I first took as my model Yen Chen-ch'ing [no. 16] and later switched to Yü Shih-nan [no. 106]. Since I came to feel that the calligraphy of the T'ang did not compare with that of the Chin and Wei [dynasties], I subsequently patterned my writing on the *Huang t'ing ching* [no. 100] as well as the *Hsian shih piao* [no. 8] and other works of Chung Yao. For three years I said of myself that I was close to high antiquity and no longer esteemed Wen Cheng-ming [nos. 48-51] and Chu Yün-ming [nos. 45-47]. However, I did not really comprehend the spirit and principles of those earlier calligraphers, but merely followed established rules. While sojourning in Chia-hsing in Chekiang Province, I was able to become fully acquainted with the original works of these people stored in the family home of Hsiang Yüan-pien [1525-1590] and realized how ignorant and conceited I had been. From then on I gradually made some small achievement.

### 63. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Ch'en Chi-ju (1558-1639)

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold paper

7¼" x 20¼"

The Art Institute of Chicago, S. M. Nickerson Collection

The poem is signed: "A poem for Ts'ao Nien, who moved to a new home. Chi-ju presents [this] to old Mr. Huai-chuang." His seal is added below.

Ch'en Chi-ju had a great number of pen names, the most popular being Mei-kung. He was from Hua-t'ing (Kiangsu Province), the same region as Mo Yün-ch'ing (no. 58). He was one of the Seven Most Talented Men of Letters of the late Ming dynasty. At the age of twenty-nine, he burned his garment of a Confucian scholar, and adopted Taoist robes, calling himself the "Man of the Hill." He wrote widely on many subjects with elegant clarity. His keen connoisseurship in painting, calligraphy, and ink rubbings was noted. He became a popular house guest of rich and prominent people. Tung Ch'i-ch'ang valued his friendship, quoted his words frequently, and was influenced to some degree by his theory of art. Together, they were the major exponents of the "literary" school of painting during the sixteenth century. They proclaimed the division of the Northern and Southern schools in Chinese painting.

Ch'en Chi-ju's calligraphy is like that of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (nos. 60-62), refined and graceful, in the cultivated and mellowed tradition of the Sung masters.

[illegible]



## 64. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Chang Jui-t'u (c. 1569—after 1644)

Hanging scroll, ink on paper

10' 10½" x 30¾"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The poem reads:

At daybreak, one rarely hears the water clock as the announcement comes from the  
High Palace Hall

His Majesty has a happy expression, the close attendant always notices it.

Following the signature, "Pai-hao-an, Jui-t'u," are two artist's seals, "Jui-t'u" and "Shu-hua-ch'an." Above the first word is another of the artist's seals, "Pai-hao" (and two illegible characters).

Chang Jui-t'u's other names are Ch'ang-kung, Erh-shui, Kuo-t'ing, Pai-hao-an, and Pai-hao-an-tao-che. On a painting dated 1639, he gave his age as seventy; thus he must have been born about 1569. In 1644, at the fall of the Ming dynasty, he was known to have still been alive. Born in Ch'üan-chou (Fukien Province), Chang Jui-t'u at the age of thirty-eight (1607) passed the final metropolitan examinations, and won the third highest rank. During the following years, he had a very successful career at court. The highest position he achieved was that of the Grand Secretary of the Chien-chi Pavilion. He fell into disgrace through his association with the infamous eunuch usurer, Wei Chung-hsien (1568–1627). After Wei Chung-hsien's death, Chang Jui-t'u, among many others, was exiled and stripped of his honors. His popularity was not re-established until recently, when Wang Chuang-wei of Taipei wrote in Chang Jui-t'u's defense. He found that the political involvements of which the artist had been accused had not been mentioned in the first edition of the Ming history, *San-ch'ao yao-tien*, and that the stele with a long prose-poem in honor of Wei Chung-hsien, written by Chang Jui-t'u, had been done at imperial command. He thus showed that the undefended calumny of Chang Jui-t'u's name for the last three hundred years had been unjustified.

During his successful years, Chang Jui-t'u was considered one of the Four Great Calligraphers of the late Ming dynasty, together with Tung Ch'ü-ch'ang (nos. 60–62), Mi Wan-chung (1570–1628), and Hsing T'ung (no. 59). He shows a powerful disposition in his calligraphy. This scroll must have been done during his time at court. He preferred to use a worn brush without a sharp tip. His broad strokes move with weightiness and angularity, and carry substantial pressure to the end of each line. His style developed from that of the stele engravings of the Northern Wei dynasty (see no. 11). His cursive manner also follows closely the style of the *Shu-p'u* by Sun Kuo-t'ing (act. 648–703) and that of the *Shih-ch'i t'ieh* (no. 9) by Wang Hsi-chih. Here, in his running style, he has all the solidity and boldness of Yen Chen-ch'ing (no. 16). He loved to do large-scale writing, which adds to the monumentality of his personal style.



64 (detail)

書漏稀聞高閣報天  
 祗有喜近臣知

白毫菴  
 端罔

## 65. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty

"The Ancient Capital, Ch'ang-an" (*Ch'ang-an ku-i*) by

Lu Chao-lin (act. 650-669)

Chang Jui-t'u (c. 1569—after 1644)

1634

Handscroll, ink on paper

11 1/8" x 15' 3 3/4"

The Art Museum, Princeton University

The text, a long poem by Lu Chao-lin, gives a critical description of the extravagance of the T'ang court. It is signed, "*Ch'ang-an ku-i* by Lu Chao-lin. Written in mid-Autumn of the year 1634 at [the studio] Pai-hao-ching-she, by Kuo-t'ing-shan-jen, Jui-t'u." Two of his seals are impressed next to his name and another is over the first word of the poem.

This example of Chang Jui-t'u's cursive script, from his later years, represents further the wide range of his splendid style. His fluidity has now matured in an individualized way. His lines move like water splashing and crashing through crags, effusive as a bubbling brook.



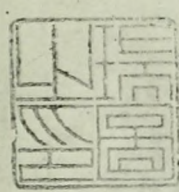
王伯子於孝

志之學子復

甲戌秋孟吉

於白雲精舍

果之山人端園



## 66. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Couplet

Chang Jui-t'u (c. 1569—after 1644)

Pair of hanging scrolls, ink on paper

9' 2½" x 18" (each)

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The couplet may be translated:

Beside my southern neighbors whom I call to the wine,

I will have no other knocking at my bramble gate.

*Translation by Jonathan Chaves*

Liang Chang-chü (1775–1849) said that Chang Jui-t'u always used the side tip for his brushstrokes, and that the bigger his characters were, the more powerful they appeared. In his later years, he was completely at ease using the side tip, as in this writing, and he developed a personal manner quite unlike that of any of his contemporaries. He was one of the few artists at this late date to be independent of the past. This is the reason he is so admired today both in China and in Japan. Calligraphy is a mute testimony to his honor.



及平南陳呼任伴

判主利呼到荆扉

端國



## 67. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty

Letter by Yü Shih-nan (558-638)

Wang To (1592-1652)

1637

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold paper

6 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 20 $\frac{3}{4}$ "

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The text consists of a brief letter by the great T'ang dynasty calligrapher, Yü Shih-nan (see 106). In the letter, he refers to the famous "About Yo I" (10A), one of the masterpieces of Wang Hsi-chih:

At your place, I saw your copy of the essay, "About Yo I," and felt that it was a case of "blue surpassing indigo." I was extremely pleased, and have often thought that I would like to emulate your work. But for some time now, I have had to give up calligraphy, because my arm has been hurting me, and I have not been able to work seriously. Yü Shih-nan.

*Translation by Jonathan Chaves*

It is inscribed, "In 1637, written by Wang To and sent to his third younger brother." A double seal of the artist appears next to the signature.

Wang To was known also as Chüeh-szu, Tung-kao, and by other names. He painted ink landscapes, bamboo, and orchids, but he was better known for his running and cursive calligraphy. At the end of the Ming dynasty, his calligraphy was as much in demand as that of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (nos. 60-62). His admirers thought that Tung Ch'i-ch'ang's writing was too feminine and attractive, whereas Wang To's was daring and masculine. Calligraphy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries once again brought forth outstanding artists with distinctly individual styles. Wang To was one of them. He loved to do large scrolls with lines like winding rattan or bending, aged cypress that straggled in length. He set a routine working pattern for himself: one day he would practice in the classical style (these writings were for himself only); the next day he would write for others, to give away and on commission. The copies after the old masters did not attempt to resemble their appearance, but to observe their spirit. He kept this habit to the end of his artistic life. He was a member of the Imperial Academy at the Ming court. After the Manchu conquered China in 1644, to many people's surprise, he accepted the rank of Minister at the Ch'ing court.

樂之樂也  
 青於海  
 無上  
 數願學子  
 以商  
 相用  
 也  
 此  
 山

## 68. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Ni Yüan-lu (1593-1644)

Hanging scroll, ink on paper

48 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ "

The University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor,  
Margaret Watson Parker Art Collection

The text consists of two lines from a poem that is most likely by the artist himself:

Out in the forest, the monkeys join me sounding the wooden knock of the priest,  
Moonlight flooded the monk's bed like a colored pale lake.

It is signed, "Yüan-lu." One of his seals is impressed below.

Ni Yüan-lu's names were Hung-pao, Yü-ju, and others. In his official career, he attained the positions of Minister of Finance and Minister of Rites. He was a member of the Imperial Academy. In the year 1644, when the Ming dynasty fell to the Ch'ing and the last Ming Emperor committed suicide in Peking, Ni Yüan-lu hearing the news, hung himself.

He was admired for his courageous honesty, and stood upright against the powerful and corrupt eunuch Wei Chung-hsien (*see* no. 64). He was noted as a poet and a calligrapher, and for his patriotism. All this seems to have overshadowed his work as a painter. His ink paintings of flowers and birds (fig. 10) are as free as those of Ch'en Shun and Hsü Wei (fig. 12), and particularly interesting are his strange rocks. His style may easily be considered the forerunner of that of Tao-chi (nos. 83, 84) and the Eight Strange Masters of Yangchow (eighteenth century).

Ni Yüan-lu was younger than Chang Jui-t'u (nos. 64-66), whom, so it appears, he had known personally. His early works show a side-tip manner close to that of Chang Jui-t'u, but in his later years, he changed to the use of round middle-tip brushstrokes. In this writing he used a new brush and the side tip, indicating that it is an early work. It also shows he was familiar with the stele style of the Northern dynasties. With all the diverse influences, he was still able to maintain his refreshing independence and preserve his own personal distinction.



林外猿聲閑院磬月中湖  
 色至禪心

元  
 弘一

元  
 弘一

68 (detail, signature)

## 69. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Ni Yüan-lu (1593–1644)

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold paper

6 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 18 $\frac{7}{8}$ "

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The poem, most likely by the artist, may be translated:

The plains stretch far into the distance,  
Utterly flat, without a single hill.

Can a thousand cash buy the song of a bird?  
Can ten thousand horses neigh as loud as the wind roars?  
Could Tu Fu, the brilliant poet, have run an onion shop?  
Could Wang Jung, the elegant official, have been a bartender?

I grow old and mad for no reason —  
But a tall man is not necessarily better than a dwarf.

*Translation by Jonathan Chaves*

It is signed "Yüan-lu." One of the artist's seals appears next to the signature.



[illegible]



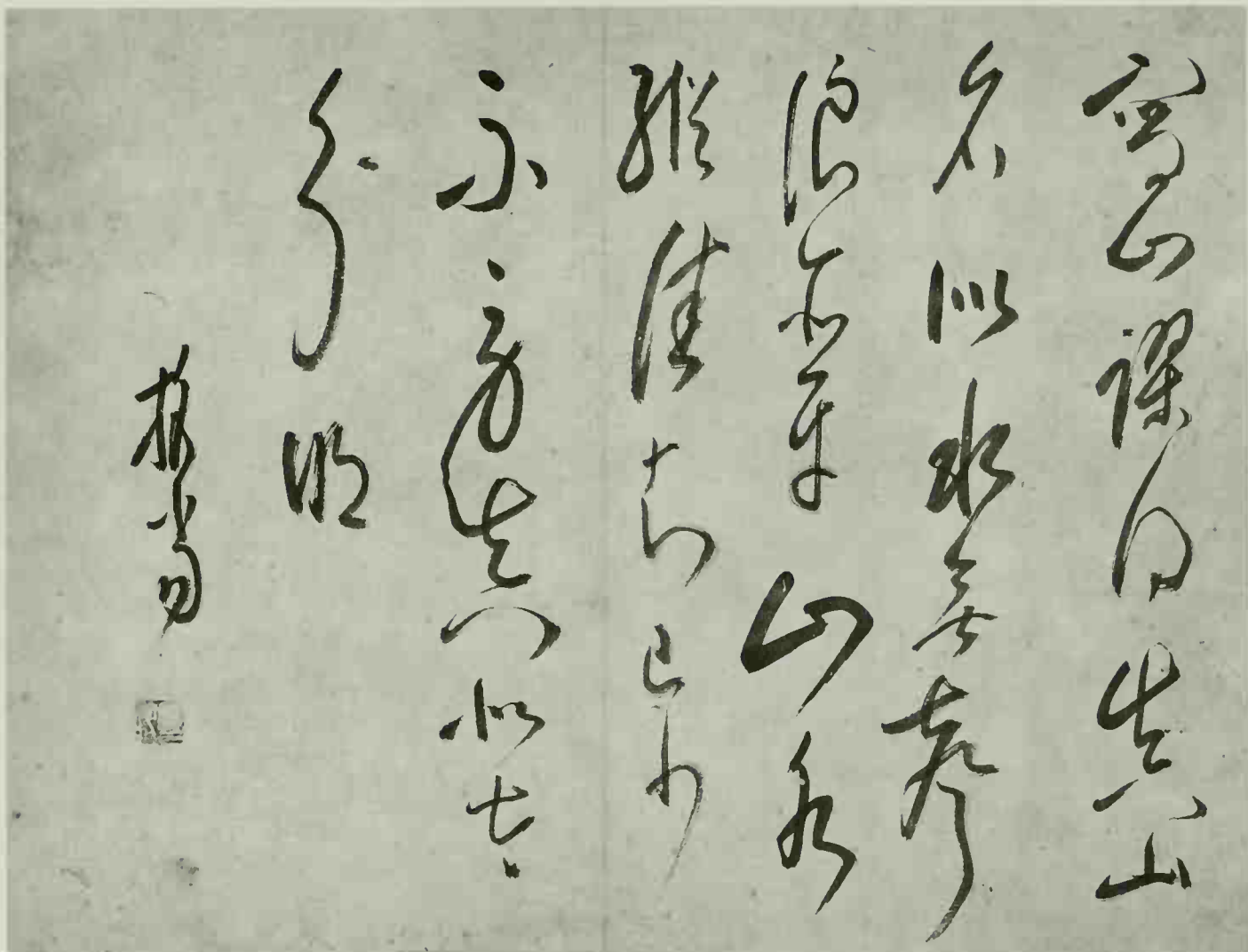
## 70. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty  
Album of Three Landscapes and Three Poems  
P'u-ho (1593-1683)  
Album leaves, ink on paper  
10 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (each)  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

This album comprises three poems and three landscapes. Rough translations appear in Kojiro Tomita and Hsien-Chi Tseng, *Portfolio of Chinese Paintings in the Museum (Yüan to Ch'ing Periods)* (Boston, 1961, pp. 24-25, pls. 141-43). The original album had more than these works, and the remaining poems and paintings do not correspond to each other.

P'u-ho, also known as T'ung-ho, Tan-tang, and Yeh-hsien, was a native of Wu-lung-shan of Chin-ning (Yünnan Province). Before he entered the Buddhist priesthood, his names were T'ang T'ai and Ta-lai. After 1644, saddened by the fall of the house of Ming, he became a monk. Very few of his works are preserved today because he burned most of them when the Ch'ing came into power.

His painting is akin to that of the Chekiang School, rather close to the moist style of Wang Wen (1497-1576, fig. 14), but his writing resembles that of Hsien-yü Shu (nos. 32, 33). Blunt-tip brushstrokes were already used by P'u-ho, a generation earlier than Chu Ta (no. 82), of whom they are so characteristic.



70 (album leaf)

The calligraphy on this leaf reads:

A painted mountain presents the fame of a real mountain;  
 a silent river (painted) is more peaceful.  
 The fine mountain and the clear water are hard to come by,  
 but one learns of their essentials (through paintings).

(Translation from Kojiro Tomita and Hsien-Chi Tseng, *Portfolio of Chinese Paintings in the Museum (Yüan to Ch'ing Periods)*, Boston, 1961, p. 25, pl. 142a)

## 71. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Attributed to Hsü Hung-chi (before 1595–1641)

Hanging scroll, ink on paper

87" x 34¼"

Collection Professor and Mrs. Gustav Ecke, Honolulu

This is a five-word-line poem, "Banquet at the T'ao Family Pavilion," by Li Po (699–762):

Down the winding lane, a secluded dwelling.  
Behind its high gate, the home of a great gentleman.  
Its clear pool reflecting like a mirror,  
Woods blossoming with flowers that would make Kasyapa Buddha smile.  
Green waters capturing the Spring day,  
A blue pavilion holding the sunset glow.  
On hearing the sweet sounds of strings and reeds,  
Even the sumptuous gardens at Chin-ku cannot boast such beauty.

*Translation by Adele Rickett*

It is signed, "Duke of Wei Hsü(?)" (*Wei-kuo-kung Hsü[?]*), and followed by a family seal, "Ming K'ai Kuo Kung" ("The Duke Who Founded the Ming Empire").

This writing had been attributed to Hsü Ta (1332–1385), one of the famous generals who fought for the Hung-wu Emperor to establish the Ming dynasty. He is particularly remembered as the one who first entered Peking and drove the Mongols out of China. His daughter became the Yung-lo Empress. He was given the title of Duke, which was to be bestowed on the family through successive generations. It continued down to the fall of the empire. There has been a question, however, as to the authorship of the scroll and its writer. Most scholars have doubts that a general fighting at the frontier, such as Hsü Ta, would have been so literarily inclined and have had such fine handwriting. Moreover, the style somewhat recalls that of Chu Yün-ming (nos. 45–47). Thus it was argued that the signature after "Wei-kuo-kung" should not be read "Hsü," but should be interpreted as two separate words, "Hung-chi." Hung-chi, of the ninth generation in the line of Dukes, had earned a reputation as a calligrapher. He received his title in 1595, and died in 1641. This writing is likely to date from that period.



出老道人定言門大士家記年  
也後說妙心此氣乃孫永莊  
吉口考軒秘心要氣以莊  
第州 至五子能詩 智隆

## 72. Regular Script

Ming dynasty

"Beckoning of Solitude" (*Chao yin t'u yung*)

Hsiang Sheng-mo (1597-1658)

1626

Handscroll, ink on paper

10½" x 25" (poems and essay)

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Museum Purchase

Twenty poems and an essay by Hsiang Sheng-mo are written after his long landscape painting on the same scroll. The writing is dated 1626. The essay gives the purpose of this work and Hsiang Sheng-mo's ideas of the attraction of a solitary life in the arts.

The title was written by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (nos. 60-62): "Painting and poetry on the 'Beckoning of Solitude.' K'ung-chang [Hsiang Sheng-mo] painted this long handscroll after his poem, 'Beckoning of Solitude,' and thus completed these double graces. [I am] here inscribing it. Tung Ch'i-ch'ang." Two of Tung's seals appear below the signature. Following Hsiang Sheng-mo's writing are five colophons by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang; Ch'en Chi-ju (no. 63); Li Jih-hua (1565-1635), dated 1627; Yü Yen, dated 1628; and Fei Nien-tz'u (1855-1905), dated 1889. The last line is by the mounter, P'an Chung-tien. It is dated 1627.

Hsiang Sheng-mo was also known as K'ung-chang, I-an, Hsü-shan-ch'iao, and by other names as well. He was the grandson of the famous collector Hsiang Yüan-pien (1525-1590). His family estate in Shao-hsing (Chekiang Province) had been prosperous in his grandfather's time, but had declined by the time it came into his possession. He was not given to luxury, and he happily made his livelihood as an artist.

His art had at first been greatly influenced by Wen Cheng-ming (nos. 48-51). Later he exploited the technique of the Sung dynasty, and utilized the facility of the Yüan artists. His flower subjects, pine, bamboo, and rocks, are his more outstanding themes. Tung Ch'i-ch'ang, who was then a much older person enjoying great prestige, had known Hsiang Sheng-mo's grandfather Hsiang Yüan-pien as a young man, and had been the tutor of Sheng-mo's father. He praised Sheng-mo as a worthy and cultivated grandson, the joyful result of his grandfather's lifelong devotion to art, and furthermore appreciated him as an artist.

This regular script by Hsiang Sheng-mo obviously derives from the domination of the Chin and T'ang styles (*see* no. 10A, C-H), a tradition that had been extended by Wen Cheng-ming, who provided Hsiang's main inspiration. These twenty poems and the painting are much more serious creations than his usual works. They are a proclamation of his philosophy of life. He preferred to live with the arts, isolated from the world. At the time of this work he was thirty years old. He gives an account of how he spent each day at sunset, lighting his lamp. For meals he had only cakes made of pine blossoms, pure tea, and no wine (which would agitate him). Only the burning of incense and the grinding of ink were delegated to a young maid. Whenever he felt tired, he would stop until the next day. Meanwhile there were flowers blooming at his window and a clear moon shining over his head. Although he was occasionally sick, he never was lax, and dedicated himself ritualistically to his work.

From the planning stage to completion, he spent nine years on this painting and these poems. At the conclusion he says:

余畫此卷自乙丑龍涉吳江舟次無事檢得此紙計共六幅  
 接為長軸始落墨也自吳放流遠至松江將匝月矣未及盈  
 尺有好事者已聞之董玄宰先生及見先生索觀甚急乃退  
 而辟舟泊白龍潭先了前一紙袖見先生點頭不語久許而  
 問之曰山高谿秀林翠撲衣人不回顧甚有超逸之風此何  
 圖也曰因讀陸機左思招隱詩有興于懷將補是圖薄莫留  
 酌豪飲劇談因論及先王大夫所藏法書名畫夜半方起  
 索之而歸是歲十月復會玄宰先生于吳江急謂余曰前觀  
 此卷之後又開得幾層丘壑耕得幾頃烟雲余曰曰未得尋  
 山侶志未竟也今將借硯田以隱焉抒懷適志亦足了生乎  
 蓋世人之出處之際不能割裂以世念未銷耳先生聞之解  
 酒蓋亦有有心人也言畢謝退歸事筆墨若忘歲月此卷計成  
 雖九易朔晦病愁相半及病起展卷日未免為塵鞅所妨兼  
 應鼎徵索者命煩亂不敢草。每至落日徐硯挑燈絕不飲  
 酒所食者松花餅茗葉湯命侍兒焚香研墨神將倦遂閣筆  
 或秉燭看花或捲簾對月爽則援豪越子丑而方寢焉累其  
 功不二月也因自展閱林巒映發草木欣向氣爽裊怡流風  
 絕俗遂題曰招隱圖并賦五言二十韻書于卷末我國知世  
 人皆非隱者也皆思隱而未肯隱能者也噫嘻哉其必有先  
 我而隱之者矣曰招我隱可也曰自我招隱可也即曰自招  
 亦無不可也我將隱朝市而不得隱陵藪而不得將隱于詩  
 畫而詩畫已散落人間又不得收拾姓字矣亟懷此而善藏  
 以俟夫同志者

天啓丙寅六月既望蓮塘居士項聖謨并記



72 (detail, end of inscription)

There were people who had chosen the solitary life before me. They are beckoning me to join them. Should it be said that I am the one who is beckoning, it may also be the case. And it may be that I am beckoning myself. I could have lived in solitude in the city, but that is not as good as living in solitude in the hills. But it would be still better to live solitarily with poetry and painting. My poetry and paintings are scattered everywhere, and it is difficult to collect them again. Therefore I compose this poetry in one scroll, hoping to find sympathy from those who understand me.

It is dated 1626, and signed, "Lien-t'ang chü-shih ['The Scholar Who Lives at Lotus Pond'], Hsiang Sheng-mo painted and inscribed here." A seal "Hsiang K'ung-chang yin" is below. He did indeed find sympathy, as he is applauded in the five colophons that follow his work.



### 73. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Ch'en Hung-shou (1599-1652)

Hanging scroll, ink on paper

45 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 12 $\frac{5}{8}$ "

The Art Museum, Princeton University

The text of this poem reads:

How I love to wander in the hills  
Drinking wine along the way.  
But of the moment, fleeting, what regret  
Such happiness can never be repeated.

*Translation by Adele Rickett*

It is inscribed, "Hung-shou presents this to the son of [my] sworn-brother, Yin-jen." Two of the artist's seals are impressed below.

Ch'en Hung-shou was also known by the names, Lao-lien, Lao-ch'ih, Chang-hou, and others. One of the finest figure painters in the archaic manner at the time of the changing of the dynasty, he had hoped to enter the civil service to help the needy nation but was unable to break into the deteriorating bureaucratic system. Without the slightest compromise with his art, he was a fairly successful professional artist. When the Ming dynasty fell in 1644, he was deeply shocked by the change, and afterward called himself Hui-ch'ih ("Belated Repentant") or Lao-ch'ih ("Old Procrastinator"). He was then even more given to drinking, and fell into a state of desperation. He died after a few years of this self-destructiveness. This is a poem written after 1644 and the fall of Ming.

His skill as a painter was rated above his ability at poetry and calligraphy, but his personal manner in writing was unique. Generally, he wrote with a thin and long-tufted brush, a type used for the fine-line drawing typical of his painting style. When he wrote poetry or comments on his paintings, it was only natural that he used the same brush for the characters. Independent writings of his in large size are rarely seen. This running script is representative of his style. It is as linear as his painting. In the wirelike lines are both moisture and dryness, thick and thin tonalities. Thus he sensitively created a pictorial space over the flat surface.

His dedication to art was much more passionate than that of other artists. It did not represent his life but was the very essence of it. All of his earnestness was concentrated in his brush and paper. He was a thorough individualist of the seventeenth century, the first of many more such artists to emerge during this period.

既好遊山矣  
 勢有出  
 修性之  
 觀後  
 矣  
 今乃  
 焉

尹人墨仙書

以波水



## 74. Running Script

Ming dynasty

"In Answer to My Friend P'ang" and "Returning Birds" by

T'ao Ch'ien (345-427)

Ch'en Yüan-su (16th-17th century)

Handscroll, ink on gold-flecked colored papers

10 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 28'4"

Center of Asian Art and Culture, The Avery Brundage Collection,  
San Francisco

Translations of the two poems may be found in *The Poems of T'ao Ch'ien* by Marjorie Sinclair and Lily Pao-hu Chang (Honolulu, 1953, pp. 16-17, 23). No date is attached to the writing. The artist signed the scroll: "T'ao's poems. Written by Ch'en Yüan-su." Two of his seals, "Ch'en Yüan-su" and "Ku-pai," are beside his signature.

Ch'en Yüan-su, a native of Wu Hsien (Kiangsu Province), was also known by the names Chin-kang, Ku-pai, and Su-weng. He was unsuccessful at the civil examination, but perfectly accepted the fate of his life, never becoming embittered. He went through life cheerfully as a modest artist. His painting and his calligraphy won him many intellectual friends, and his works were treasured by them. His ink paintings of orchids were particularly appreciated, and he was considered the best artist to paint orchids after Wen Cheng-ming.

His calligraphy was derived from the school of Wang Hsi-chih (nos. 9, 10 A-D), combined with the grace of Wen Cheng-ming (nos. 48-51) and T'ang Yin (1470-1523). He was a man with tact and exquisite taste, a cultivated artist with great sensibility. This was written with comfort and ease; it began like wind through a meadow. As he proceeded on this lengthy handscroll, his arm became loosened, his brush temper mounted. The lines turn larger and move faster, as if going from a trot to a gallop. This was written at one sitting.



磨兮  
懷兮  
南兮  
翻波兮  
舟兮  
江中  
卦正人  
在如里

74 (detail)

標是凡  
清興好  
音時  
福源平  
祐已老安  
芳  
同祐  
陳元素

74 (detail, end of scroll)

## 75. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Ch'en Yüan-su (16th-17th century)

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold paper

6 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 20 $\frac{7}{8}$ "

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The poem may be translated:

The traveler lives outside the city wall,  
His house surrounded by peaks on every side.  
Blue-green mountains push toward the isolated city;  
The sky touches a lake filled with lotus blossoms.  
I want someone to write "common bird" on my gate [As did Lü An on finding  
Hsi K'ang (the master of the lute) not at home];  
I have seen the sleeping dragon in the clouds.  
Now, two dragons embrace the sun and dance —  
They are pine trees, planted here by the owner of the house.

*Translation by Jonathan Chaves*

It is signed "Ch'en Yüan-su" with a double seal impressed next to the signature.

天若地無用  
 水涵萬物  
 從門外  
 題凡身曾向  
 雲霄後  
 以龍蛇  
 虹龍蛇  
 兩橋松



## 76. Running Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Shih K'o-fa (1602-1645)

Hanging scroll, ink on paper

65 1/4" x 30"

Philadelphia Museum of Art, Given by the Friends of the Museum

The poem, composed by the artist, begins as follows:

Long has my brush been ready to serve the glory of the Ming  
Directly picking those of talent and ability to supplement the good men of the  
military guards.  
In sacrificial affairs I have always paid attention to the ceremonies of the Chou.  
In the writing of eulogistic monuments I have invariably used the literary style of  
the Han.  
As the clouds descend the crack of whips sounds far off in the distant field.  
Under the full moon the water clock in the tall tower drips away the long night.  
Even in my tent I ceaselessly toil with affairs of state.  
How I would like to hear someone write a prose-poem in imitation of Yang  
Hsiung's *Ch'ang-yang Fu*.

Translation by W. Allyn Rickett

It is signed, "Written by K'o-fa"; two of his seals are beside his signature.

Shih K'o-fa, also known as Hsien-chih and Tao-lin, was a famous loyalist general of the Ming dynasty. After passing his academic graduation, he occupied many important posts. Finally, in 1643, he was appointed President of the Board of War at Nanking. When the Ming empire fell in 1644 and the Emperor committed suicide in Peking, he and other loyalists installed a prince in the south, in the hope of restoring the lost regime. However, all his efforts and his courage were in vain against the expanding invasion of China. In 1645, at Yangchow, Shih K'o-fa was caught by the Ch'ing army. He repeatedly rejected the offers from the Ch'ing court, and finally, at his own demand, was executed. Descriptions of his heroic behavior are recorded in many books. He was highly honored posthumously by both the Ming Pretender and the Ch'ien-lung Emperor of the Ch'ing.

With his dramatic background as a hero of the Ming dynasty, his gift as a calligrapher comes as a surprise. From the words of his poem, this scroll may have been written shortly before his arrest by the Ch'ing army. Although he claimed that he was lacking in the practice of true art, both poem and calligraphy present him as a man of great capacity for art and letters. Comparatively few examples of his work survive. His biographers seem to have been completely overwhelmed by his heroic behavior and never to have taken notice of his talent in art. His calligraphy shows the best influence of such early Ming masters as Chu Yün-ming (nos. 45-47), Wen Cheng-ming (nos. 48-51), and Hsü Wei (no. 57). He was a calligrapher of distinguished accomplishment.

光年簪笏付明光  
立取才華補衛良  
祀事志稽周典  
禮頌碑頌低渾文  
章雲重迴望瞻  
瞻遙月時多接  
二編長棧穠多  
祛光  
卷之五  
中  
時  
就  
撰  
書  
均  
可  
法  
書

## 77. Cursive Script

Ming dynasty

Poem

Fu Shan (1607-1684)

Hanging scroll, ink on satin

9' 3  $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 18  $\frac{3}{4}$ "

The Art Museum, Princeton University

The poem reads:

The Red Pavilion [of the Imperial Household] with safety lock [now] is wide open.  
His Majesty talks aloud, no gate is shut.  
After a hundred officers of the government offered their obeisance,  
As a dragon wiping out tigers, he dominates the great earth.

It is signed, "Written by Shan"; one of his seals is impressed below.

Fu Shan was also known as Ch'ing-chu, Shih-tao-jen, Se-lu, and by other names. In the year 1644, when the Ming empire fell, he claimed that in a dream the Supreme Taoist God gave him a Taoist cap, thus turning him into a priest. He named himself Chu-i-tao-jen, which means "The Taoist Priest Who Wears the Vermilion Garment," an attire he wore for the rest of his life.

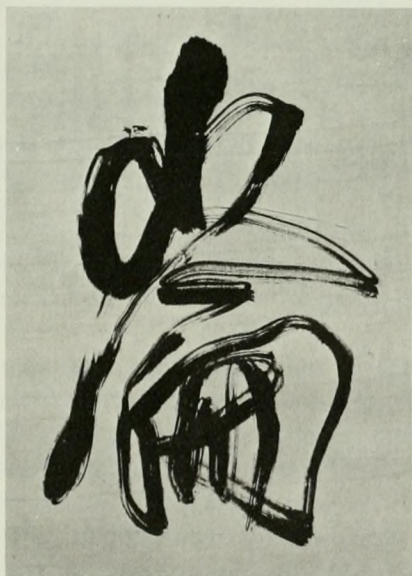
He had a reputation as a fine calligrapher in his own time. He never became a professional artist, but taught the Chinese classics in his home region in Shensi to as many as three hundred students at one time. He was admired by friends for his scholarship in classical studies and art history. Beside that, he practiced the arts of an herb doctor. When the newly established Ch'ing court learned of his reputation, they offered him official posts, which he emphatically refused.

He painted bamboo subjects, old trees, and landscapes. His painting, like his dashing cursive script, is daring and extremely individual. His seal engraving and calligraphy, especially his "delirious" cursive script, are the best known among his creative arts. However, according to his friends, he was at his best in the official and regular styles. Such writings of his are very rare today.

The content of this poem poses one question; whether it was meant to be merely a playful composition, or if it implied a criticism of the new regime. Fu Shan always had been inclined to sarcasm, and openly expressed his political resentments. His calligraphy turns abruptly, jerking sharply as though insinuating with taunting twists.



紫微星降散丹軒大帝高談玄妙門  
 百寶分輝設色龍鞭雷下昆崙  
 書



77 (detail)

## 78. Running Script

Ming dynasty

"Discourse on Painting" (*Hua-shuo*)

Fa Jo-chen (1613-1696)

1667

Handscroll, ink on paper

12 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 12' 2"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The "Discourse on Painting," dated 1667, does not appear in the collected works of Fa Jo-chen. It is a satirical work about the artist's standing in the world. Shijiro Shimada, in *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.* (New York, 1962, p. 153), has summarized the ideas presented in the "Discourse":

The scholar-painter is a man who is awkward in the world of practical affairs. Such a man, conscious of his want of ability, addresses himself to the study of the classics. If he fails to attain distinction in this field, he should then turn to painting; if still unsuccessful, he may then retire and apply himself to the craft of an artisan-painter. With his mention of an artisan's craft he ironically suggests that it is not technique but the spirit and conception of the artist which is essential in the art of painting. The point of his statement is that the scholar-painter stands aloof from the honors and profits of the world. . . .

The scroll is signed, "Painted for Master Ming-shih, Huang-shan, Fa Jo-chen." Two of the artist's seals are impressed next to the signature; another appears at the beginning of the writing.

Fa Jo-chen, who was known as Han-ju and Huang-shan (I-shih), and by other names, was born in Shantung Province, but spent the later part of his life in Huang-shan (Anhui Province), a beautiful mountain region well known to artists. Fa Jo-chen was the Governor of that province, and painted also, in the amateur scholarly tradition. Although he had been little known as an artist, some years ago his art was "rediscovered." His landscape paintings are rather massive in conception, in a style quite his own. They show him as an artist with an unconventional taste for the fantastic. His calligraphy, however, does not appear to match the weird spirit of his painting, but he is fluent in mind and in the movement of his brush.

書說

或謂書者曰先生其天下之  
王者乎書者曰否此非天下之  
所信王者也其及天下之王者  
而後事也天下之王者信公  
卿士大夫士大夫之術名  
天子之臣之臣之利於生  
則厚其身隱其利





79

## 79. Regular Script

Ch'ing dynasty

Two Poems

Liang Ch'ing-piao (1620-1691)

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on gold paper

9 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ "

Collection Laurence Sickman, Courtesy Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum,  
Kansas City

These two *tz'u* poems by the artist are inscribed: "Gentle breeze brush the heat away in this little studio, Chou-chin-t'ang. To my elder colleague Mu-chung. Yün-chung, Liang Ch'ing-piao." Two of the artist's seals follow his name and one precedes the poems.

Liang Ch'ing-piao, a native of Cheng-ting (Hopei Province), was the most highly regarded collector and connoisseur of art in the seventeenth century. His seals bearing his names are T'ang-ts'un, Yü-li, Ts'ang-yen-tzu, Chiao-lin chü-shih, and Yeh-ch'i-yü-yin. Because of his discerning judgment, paintings and calligraphy known to have belonged to him are credited with great importance. This is a rare example of Liang Ch'ing-piao's writing, revealing the influence of Su Shih (1036-1101).

## 80. Running Script

Ch'ing dynasty  
Album of Calligraphy and Landscape Paintings  
Kung Hsien (1620?-1689)  
Album leaves, ink on paper  
6¼" x 7⅝" (each)  
The Art Museum, Princeton University

The writing on the twelve leaves may be translated:

1

I am so afraid of producing a painting that is too competent.

Seal: "Kung Hsien chih-yin."

2

I am good at painting willows, which I learned from Li Liu-fang [1575-1629], and then developed my new manner. Ch'ang-heng [Liu-fang] painted willows sparsely. My manner is often too full. I am still trying hard to match the willows of Ch'ang-heng.

Seal: "Hsien."

3

Cheng Ch'ien [eighth century] of the T'ang dynasty did a painting named "Ancient Trees." His round, full brush is so rich that not one artist of the tenth century was able to capture it. How can a painter of a later age be able to pursue it? I am trying.

Seal: "Pan-ch'ien."

4

Calligraphy in the time of Mi Fu [no. 22] stressed the horizontal. Painting in the time of Mi Fu stressed the horizontal even more. It was explored to its limits; therefore artists like Ni [Tsan, 1301-1374] and Huang [Kung-wang, 1269-1354] created new styles. It was necessary to have this change.

Seal: "Kung Hsien yin."

5

A monk asked:

"How was the landscape of the great earth created?"

The answer was:

"How was the landscape of the great earth created?"

A painter who understands this will never be lacking in landscape composition.

Seal: "Ch'i-hsien."

6

Modern artists change according to the popular fashion. I alone refuse to follow popular taste. Note this for a laugh.

Seal: "Kung Hsien."

7

Landscape painting flourished in the Northern Sung and continued throughout the Southern Sung and Yüan. Even Ni Tsan's landscape has a substantial aspect that his imitators never understood. Since they never saw an original Ni Tsan, how can they follow his style?

Seal: "Pan-ch'ien."

Less is more, which is the advanced stage of a painter. Hence the five-word quatrain, which is the most difficult style of all poetry.

Seal: "Kung Pan-ch'ien."

To be clever is not as good as being simple. Too skillful interpretations can be seen at one glance. Simplicity embodies untold mystery.

Seal: "Pan-shan-yeh-jen."

Nowadays, a landscape painter knows nothing about brush and ink, yet he talks about the "resonant spirit." The resonant spirit does not depend on the amount of ink wash. Ink wash in gradations remains in a playful range.

Seal: "Ch'en Hsien."

To paint does not necessarily mean to follow the ancients. Among modern artists, Tung Ch'i-ch'ang [nos. 60-62] is outstanding. His work is a lofty model to follow. This painting of mine resembles that of Yang Lung-yu [Wen-ts'ung, 1597-1645]. In earlier years we both followed Tung Ch'i-ch'ang.

Seal: "Chung-shan-yeh-lao."

When reducing brushwork in painting, one must avoid the manner of the Northern school [Ma Yüan, twelfth-thirteenth century; Hsia Kuei, thirteenth century]. A collector who owns paintings of the Northern school would downgrade his total collection. This must be noted. In the Wu region there is no Northern school.

Seal: "Yeh-i."

Kung Hsien had many pen names, the best known being Pan-ch'ien, Ch'ai-chang, Yeh-i, and Ch'i-hsien. He was a native of K'un-shan (Kiangsu Province), but lived in Nanking. Kung Hsien was a well-known poet and the leading artist in Nanking. Seven other painters followed in his style of landscape painting, and together they became known as the Eight Masters of Nanking (*Chin-ling pa-chia*).

Kung Hsien has been labeled as one of the eccentric "individualists." A strong-willed person, he lived in poverty and kept to a small circle of friends, most of whom were Ming loyalists in a society called *Fu-she* ("Restoration Society"). Among his close artist-friends were K'un-ts'an (seventeenth-eighteenth century), Hung-jen (d. 1663), Yang Wen-ts'ung, Li Liu-fang, and Chou Liang-kung (1612-1672). He was a dedicated painter (see fig. 15), eager to find his own personal style of expression outside of the classical tradition. He emphasized a return to learning directly from nature. His landscape sketches show a strong contrast of light and shadow, creating forms with sculptural dimension.

Kung Hsien never considered his own calligraphy to be an important part of his creative work. Like Ch'en Hung-shou (no. 73), his painting overshadowed his art of writing, although his writing does have a personal style. He used the same painting brush as Tao-chi (nos. 83, 84) and readily combined dry and wet brushstrokes with their varying ink tonalities, and thick and thin lines. His rhythm parallels that of his ink paintings. His landscapes have the majesty and gravity of tenth-century paintings, while his writing reveals a rather fluid grace.



墨不又遊師  
と日の筆華  
墨高遊亦  
此作成反以  
以余の時  
華年  
如



## 81. Running Script

Ch'ing dynasty

Poem

Ta Ch'ung-kuang (1623-1692)

1655

Handscroll, mounted on board, ink on paper

10½" x 23½"

Collection Colonel and Mrs. Edward W. Rosenbaum, Rydal, Pennsylvania

This poem was written in the Autumn of 1655, to the Abbot during the artist's visit at the temple of Mount Chiu-hua. There is no signature, but one of the artist's seals, "Sung-tzu-ko," precedes the writing at top right. At bottom right is a collector's studio name. At the end of the poem are two more artist's seals, "Ta Ch'ung-kuang yin" and "Yü-kang chü-shih."

Ta Ch'ung-kuang had many pen names; among those he frequently used are Chiang-shang wai-shih, and Yü-kang, Yü-kang chü-shih, or Yü-kang sao-yeh tao-jen. Originally from Tan-t'u (Kiangsu Province), he passed the national civil examination in 1652, and eventually reached the position of Censor to the court.

A great friend of the artists Wang Shih-ku (better known as Wang Hui, 1632-1717) and Yün Nan-t'ien (better known as Yün Shou-p'ing, 1633-1690), he was also a well-known landscape painter himself. His calligraphy chiefly derived from the writing of Mi Fu (no. 22) and Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (nos. 60-62), in a style replete with grace and fluency. He won particular admiration from Wang Wen-chih (no. 92). His two books, one on painting and one on calligraphy, show him to have been an intellect with distinguished taste. His work is now rarely seen. This writing, though damaged, is a fine example of his art.



己未秋。署九華山達  
口人精舍

秋氣初寒。廊下坐聽

簫聲。東風吹雨。二三

舍。壽陽九華山。江

溫。經行。臨江。明。施

石。臺。遠。上。客。或。江

遠。上。客。街。林

十里城南。寺。出。入。日。小

東。蒙。山。北。取。石。月

東。桂。石。月。年。風。系

遠。望。藏。書。舍。不。盡。少

隨。釣。臺。一。年。出。入。一

是。老。是。殘。秋





## 82. Running Script

Ch'ing dynasty

Essay

Chu Ta (c. 1625–c. 1705)

Folding fan, mounted as an album leaf, ink on paper

6¾" x 19½"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The text is a short essay:

You are rich in artistic talent, full of compassion, and an outstanding teacher. You long ago received the teaching of "hurrying across the courtyard" [when Li, the son of Confucius, learned three things from his father—about the *Book of Songs*, about the rituals, and that a gentleman keeps his son at a distance], and devoted yourself to the work of "leaning over a pond" [The calligrapher Chang Chih was said to have practiced calligraphy while leaning over a pond. Its waters would turn black from his ink]. A few days ago, knowing that you are now particularly fond of "flying white" writing, I playfully manipulated brush and ink, and did some calligraphy for you which departed shamefully from the elegant forms of the Six Calligraphic Modes, and differed from the beautiful diction of the Five Relations [said in the *Han shu* to be characteristic of the *Book of Songs*]. I soon received a letter from you in which you praised my work excessively. Because my poor writing is unworthy of such acclaim, successive readings of your letter have only served to increase my embarrassment.

*Translation by Jonathan Chaves*

It is inscribed to Wen Yü-nien, and signed "Pa-ta-shan-jen" with a seal "Shih-te."

Chu Ta, whose official name was Chu Yu-jui, was called by many other names, the best known being Pa-ta-shan-jen ("Old Man of the Eight Mountains"). He was a direct descendant of Emperor T'ai-tsu, the founder of the Ming dynasty. For generations his family had lived in Nan-ch'ang (Kiangsu Province). When he was nineteen, the Ming dynasty collapsed, and his father was killed. These circumstances forced him to withdraw from the world, and he entered a Buddhist monastic order. Some years later, his mother urged a marriage on him. By that time he had become a Taoist priest. Refusing to compromise with the new regime, he pretended to be dumb, gave up speech, and conversed only in sign language or by writing. Although at times he appeared truly deranged, his loyalty to the Ming court remained clear and constant.

Chu Ta's painting and poetry are full of his unyielding resistance. His reputation as an accomplished artist actually began late. According to Li Tan, he began to sign the name Pa-ta-shan-jen on his work only about 1680–90, after he was fifty-five. By this time he was a widely recognized, popular, and respected artist; his reputation continued without wavering after his death, and he is a favorite of twentieth-century artists.

His works are original and have a power rarely matched by other artists, but his calligraphy, overshadowed by his painting, has hardly been discussed. Quite a few impressive examples of his calligraphy survive, done mostly in running script, but occasionally in a wild cursive script. He preferred to use a worn brush for both painting and calligraphy. Using a very blunt tip, he achieved a completely personal calligraphic style. His even strokes are frank and plain, having no resilient twists, and are simple and honest, less varied than in his painting.

Throughout his career, there was little change in his style. He was accustomed to writing the first character of his signature, *pa* 八 in two curved strokes, but after the age of seventy, he is said to have written it with two straight dots as is seen on this fan.

深抗  
 誦鳳  
 早訓  
 南檀  
 比其  
 昨來  
 散操  
 六女  
 之麗  
 之芳  
 詞句  
 謫飭  
 迥實  
 迥昨  
 敢當  
 循環  
 粒以  
 血手  
 天長  
 永年  
 通元  
 西溪  
 家



### 83. Running Script

Ch'ing dynasty

Letter to Pa-ta-shan-jen

Tao-chi (1641-c. 1720)

Album leaves, ink on paper

7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" x 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (each)

The Art Museum, Princeton University, Arthur M. Sackler Collection

For a translation of the text, see Fong Wen, "A Letter from Shih-t'ao to Pa-ta-shan-jen and the Problem of Shih-t'ao's Chronology," *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America*, xiii (1959), p. 25; and *The Painting of Tao-chi* (catalogue of an exhibition at the Museum of Art, University of Michigan), Ann Arbor, 1967, pp. 79-80. The letter is signed, "Chi, *tun-shou* [greetings]," and a seal of the artist is impressed between the characters. There are fifteen collectors' seals.

Fong Wen, in several articles, has offered meticulous examinations of the text of this letter, in which Tao-chi wrote a message to his admirer Pa-ta-shan-jen (Chu Ta, no. 82). Fong Wen considers it a beautiful and authentic piece of calligraphy, and an important work of art.

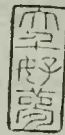
Tao-chi's official name was Chu Jo-chi; his priest and pen names were Shih-t'ao, K'u-kua-ho-shang, Ch'ing-hsiang-lao-jen, Ta-ti-tzu, as well as a number of others. He was of noble descent as a member of the Chu family, which had been settled in Kuei-lin (Kwangsi Province) for generations. At the fall of the Ming dynasty, his father was defeated in Kuei-lin, retreated to Foochow (Fukien Province), and was killed in 1646. It is said that at the age of eleven, Tao-chi became a Buddhist monk. He spent the remaining long years painting and writing. His poetry and his remarks inscribed on paintings are extremely provocative, and his book, *Hua yü lu*, is the most enlightening treatise concerning painting.

Like his cousin Pa-ta-shan-jen, he was brought up in troubled times, but the drastic political change seems to have been of advantage to him as an artist. His emotion, intensified, was transmitted into the great vitality of his art. He traveled extensively, and developed a particular independence within his art and his aesthetic theories, with no hint of imperial patronage. He was another giant of this transitional period. He used to be paired with another monk-artist, Shih-ch'i (K'un-ts'an, seventeenth-eighteenth century), as one of the "Two Shih." He is now regarded as one of the most outstanding "individualists" of the seventeenth century.

Tao-chi was not actually a conscientious calligrapher, that is to say, he did not discipline himself in the fashion of Wen Cheng-ming (nos. 48-51) or Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (nos. 60-62). He drew his inspiration from the official script (nos. 7, 14) and the sutra style (nos. 18, 20). He used the same brush for painting and writing, and sometimes the ink tonality varies from dark black to pale grey. He seems to have been less interested in the art of calligraphy for its own sake than in the content of what he was writing. This letter appears to be more dashing than usual, the strokes flow with great ease. As a result it has the flare of Su Shih (1036-1101).



集此等病真是笑話  
 人今日李松庵兄還  
 南州書函寄  
 上修求  
 先生三尺為一天闊小幅  
 平坡上老屋數椽在

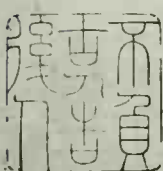
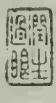
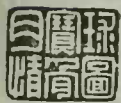


本標散教殊閤中  
 一老叟為諸所有即  
 大滌子大滌書也此書  
 事不誤以者餘紙求  
 以書教列於上與  
 此實物也向承所寄太

大屋小放不下款求書大  
 滌子大滌竹書莫書  
 和書為有冠有款及人  
 向上一齊滌只不健還  
 身至西江一觀  
 先生願為為知老病在月

如月  
 雲家老先生

以



## 84. Running Script

Ch'ing dynasty

"On a Wan-li Porcelain-Handled Brush" (*Wan-li tz'u-kuan*)

Tao-chi (1641–c. 1720)

1705

Hanging scroll, ink on paper

43" x 15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>"

The University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor,

Margaret Watson Parker Art Collection

This poem is inspired by a porcelain-handled brush of the Wan-li period (1573–1620). As translated in *The Painting of Tao-chi* (catalogue of an exhibition at the Museum of Art, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1967, p. 91), the poem and inscription read:

This porcelain brush-handle chases the heat,  
Its year beginning from Wan-li;  
How often has it touched an old firm love.  
Half an arm reaches for P'eng-lai's immortality;  
Turned back then to dreams of rivers and mountains,  
A longing for old earth and dust;  
Truly am I moved—beyond speech.  
Only the odd word, here and there.

1705, the beginning of summer,  
in gratitude to Master Chüeh-kung.  
He gave me Shen-tsung's old brush.  
Examining it, I could not bear to  
have it leave my hands. I have written  
this from deepest thanks.

Four seals of the artist appear over the writing.

The hanging scroll is a rare format for Tao-chi, but the calligraphy is typically his. The characters stress horizontality; it has the rhythm of the official script shown on Han wooden tablets (no. 6).

石管祛炎筆季從萬曆開幾曾經固應  
半臂托蓬萊化卻江山謬情懷故  
土灰感誠無可說一字一徘徊

乙酉新夏感

爵公大師尊宿以先

神宗故筆見贈把玩不惡釋手書以頂謝

清湘大弟子極



## 85. Seal Script

Ch'ing dynasty

"Long Life" (*Shou*)

Wang Shih-shen (1686-1749)

1735

Hanging scroll, mounted on board, ink on paper (retouched in red and black)  
79" x 33 3/4"

Collection Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Litaker, Honolulu

The large character, *Shou* ("Long Life"), in seal script is in the center. The characters to the right read, "This inscription is from a bronze vessel" (*Yo-szu-t'u-yu*). On the left, it is dated, "early Spring, 1735," and signed "Mang-tso-lao-jen." There is no artist's seal.

Wang Shih-shen was also known as Chin-jen, Ch'ao-lin, Ch'i-tung-wai-shih, and Mang-tso-sheng (lao-jen). Although a native of Hsiu-ning (Anhwei Province), he preferred to live in Yangchow as a freelance artist. He was one of the Eight Strange Masters of Yangchow, noted for his poetry, his painting of flower subjects, and for his seal engraving. After the interest in seal art was revived by Chao Meng-fu (nos. 30, 31), Wen Cheng-ming (nos. 48-51) and his son Wen P'eng (no. 43 B) continued the study of this art. By the eighteenth century, there was much enthusiasm for the art of seal engraving, particularly among the Eight Strange Masters of Yangchow. This interest chiefly grew out of the study of ink rubbings obtained from bronze and stone inscriptions. Artists drew inspiration not only from stele engravings, but also from ancient bronze inscriptions. Seal art is a branch of calligraphy, miniature in character. Within the small framework, the contrast of lines and voids must be carefully planned. It demands a sense for design, thus complementing the arts of painting and calligraphy.

樂司設司

卷

雍正十有三年小春左省老人書

## 86. Official Script

Ch'ing dynasty

Passage from *Chou-li*

Chin Nung (1687-1764)

1720

Hanging scroll, ink on paper

47 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ "

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

This writing of a passage from *Chou-li* (a description of rituals and the administrative system of the Chou dynasty) is dated 1720 and inscribed: "Written in the temple north of the city of Kuang-ling, for Brother Li-hsien, Chin Nung of Hangchow." Two seals of the artist follow the inscription.

Chin Nung had a great number of pen names; the ones he most frequently used were Tung-hsin, Shou-men, and Pai-erh-yen-t'ien fu-weng ("The 102 Ink-Stones Rich Man"). He was an outstanding seal engraver, and was also known as a poet and calligrapher. After the age of fifty he took up the art of painting, at once grasping its essence, and developed a highly individual style—lofty, archaic, and excellent. He was devoted to the study of ink rubbings and had several thousand of them in his collection.

Chin Nung traveled widely in his middle age, and was never tied to work in an office. After the death of his wife, he chose Yangchow as his home. He lived in a temple there, and was a sincere believer in Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism although he never became a priest. He made a modest but sufficient living from his professional career as an artist. He was the most original artist among the Eight Strange Masters of Yangchow. He also counted among his talents the ability to design wrought-ironwork for lanterns and wall decorations.

Chin Nung's poetry, painting, and calligraphy were all equally creative and distinct. His strokes, in a style that grew out of Northern stele engravings, appear as if chiseled out of stone, and are reminiscent of the German Gothic script. This hanging scroll was done when Chin Nung was thirty-three. It shows the development of an unusual creative independence. The horizontal lines are broad, the vertical lines thin, as though he used a very flat brush. This script should not be classified as merely official script, for it is an entirely personal adaptation. Constructed architecturally, it is at once solemn and sublime.



主月既乾之周  
 殖星陟以西禮  
 也辰萬安嶺職  
 所物伍春方  
 昭易一和氏  
 印之嶺傳河  
 也義通日南  
 也也氣一一  
 頤祀霞嶺鎮  
 一典行則日  
 川日而罷華  
 所日施天謂

康子五月書于廣陵北郭僧廬下  
 立先尊兄清鑒 杭弟金榮

## 87. Official Script

Ch'ing dynasty

Couplet

Chin Nung (1687-1764)

1730

Pair of hanging scrolls, ink on paper

48" x 7" (each)

Wango H. C. Weng Collection, New York

The couplet may be translated:

My drinking capacity is more than three goblets;  
My heart is roaming [happily] through the books.

It is dated 1730, and signed, "Chih-ch'iu lao-sheng, Chin Nung"; two artist's seals follow the signature.

Chin Nung wrote this at the age of forty-three, before he had begun to paint, and ten years after the hanging scroll (no. 86) was written. The style is similar in both; these illustrate that he was equally at ease writing large and small characters.

飲墨不山亏三雅

廣成長至前二日書

文心乃游乎羣書

易表若生之重



## 88. Regular Script

Ch'ing dynasty

Poems

Chin Nung (1687-1764)

1754

Album leaves, ink on paper

6½" x 10¼" (each)

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The album contains thirty-eight poems by Chin Nung; twenty-four concern the art of the old masters, the fourteen others are about his own paintings or in remembrance of certain events. It is dated 1754 and inscribed: "Written for Mr. Hsieh-ku. Chin Nung, a man from Hangchow offers his obeisance." Two artist's seals follow.

Chin Nung wrote this at the age of sixty-seven, when he had become devoted to painting. The Gothic feeling is still present, but is less mannered. The horizontal is stressed in this soberly regular script; its appearance is even more archaic, simple, and deliberately awkward.

秋荷

渚宮水殿客依稀不信  
人間秋漸非連日敗荷  
傷夜雨暗銷青蓋落紅  
衣

昨行松徑中見山桃一  
株正開作詩戲蒼蒼髯  
叟豈我責耶

## 89. Running Script

Ch'ing dynasty  
Poetic Colophon  
Chang Chao (1691-1745)  
1736  
Handscroll, ink on paper  
19¼" x 10' 6¼"  
Honolulu Academy of Arts, Purchase, 1952

This colophon is a long poem written after a bamboo painting by Hsia Ch'ang (1388-1470), *Hsieh-ku ch'ing feng*. The poem recounts the beauty of the painting and states that it was in the collection of Hsiang Yüan-pien (1525-1590), Kao Shih-ch'i (1645-1703), and finally entered the Palace collection. It is dated 1736.

Chang Chao's other names are Te-t'ien and Ching-nan. He was a native of Hua-t'ing (Kiangsu Province). He passed the national civil examination at the age of eighteen and went on to have a successful career in government. He died at the age of fifty-four, and was given the posthumous title of Grand Tutor of the Crown Prince. He was known for his knowledge of legal matters, and was talented in poetry, music, painting, and calligraphy. Greatly admired by the Yung-cheng and Ch'ien-lung Emperors, he was one of the compilers of the extensive catalogues of painting and calligraphy in the Palace collection (*Shih chü pao chi* and *Pi-tien chu-lin*).

Chang Chao's calligraphic training first followed the art of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (nos. 60-62), and then Mi Fu (no. 22) and Yen Chen-ch'ing (no. 16). The Ch'ien-lung Emperor considered his work stronger than that of Mi Fu and Tung Ch'i-ch'ang and thought that he was the best calligrapher of the Ch'ing dynasty. He was not very productive, and most of his works were in the former Palace collection. This colophon belongs among his more monumental writings.



須親用環視三  
難歛息延津合  
浦幸豈殊札隆  
之元冬十月張照  
為記卷之附



## 90. Running Script

Ch'ing dynasty

Poem

Cheng Hsieh (1693-1765)

Hanging scroll, ink on paper

53" x 26"

Collection John M. Crawford, Jr., New York

The poem reads:

South and north of the river, snow is just melting.  
Foggy tender yellows merge on the new branches.  
The traveler who passed has been on the Pa River.  
The visitor from Ch'u left fast, as before the swing of a dancing maiden.  
Spring comes with rain on the road.  
Evening sun sends a breeze over the desolate bridges,  
Like a thread of cotton, of silk, pulling the [heartfelt] regret.  
How very far is the young man's route of return.

It is inscribed: "To my old colleague Yüan. Pan-ch'iao, Cheng Hsieh." Two seals, "Cheng Hsieh chih-yin" and "Wei-i chang," follow the signature.

Cheng Hsieh, whose other names are K'o-jou and Pan-ch'iao, also called himself Feng-tzu ("The Mad One"). Born in Hsing-hua in the Yangchow Prefecture (Kiangsu Province), Cheng Hsieh was renowned for his talents as a poet, essayist, calligrapher, painter (*see* fig. 18), and seal artist. He was one of the Eight Strange Masters of Yangchow and one of the Seven Great Seal Engravers of the Ch'ing dynasty.

Cheng Hsieh served for twelve years (1736-48) as the Mayor of Wei Hsien (Shantung Province). After he was released from his post, he earned his living with his painting, and composed essays on commission. Although he was not rich, he was a generous friend to those in need. He never married, was an extremely outspoken individual, and a notorious eccentric. Among the old masters, he most admired Hsü Wei (no. 57), whose creation and personality strongly affected Cheng Hsieh. They both shared a common spirit—the air of unyielding independence.

Cheng Hsieh's calligraphy received inspiration from the Sung artist Su Shih (1036-1101) and from the earlier Han stele engravings in the official style. The squat appearance and the emphasis of the stressed horizontal strokes to the right are special features of the official style (*see* no. 7). Cheng Hsieh, however, fused them with the seal, regular, and running styles. He never saw the writings on the Han wooden tablets (*see* no. 6), nor had he seen the brush writings on the earthen funerary ware of the Han dynasty. Nevertheless, there is a kinship between them. It is the instinctive coordination of the elements in the four major types of brush technique. Some people called his style *Li-ts'ao* ("the running style of official script"). He himself named it the "six-and-one-half tenths" (*liu-fen-pan-shu*), that is, six-and-one-half-tenths of the official style. He has something in common with Tao chi (nos. 83, 84).

Chiang Shih-chüan (1725-1785), a well-known poet, wrote about Cheng Hsieh's calligraphy:

Pan-ch'iao writes as if he were painting an orchid. His waving [lines] are peculiar and antiquarian, as if moving and turning on wings. Pan-ch'iao paints orchids as if he were writing. In graceful leaves and scattered blossoms, [he] conveys his manner and taste. . . ."

江南江北雪初消  
漢水輕黃惹嫩條  
灞岸已攀行李楚  
宮先騎舞姬嬌  
清曉帶雨臨官道  
晚風拂聖柳如絲  
如絲正奈恨王孫  
歸路一何遙

元嘉重元

板橋鄭燮

印

印



## 91. Regular Script

Ch'ing dynasty

Poem

Liu Yung (1719-1804)

Folding fan, mounted on inscribed wooden sticks, ink on gold-flecked paper

12½" x 20"

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

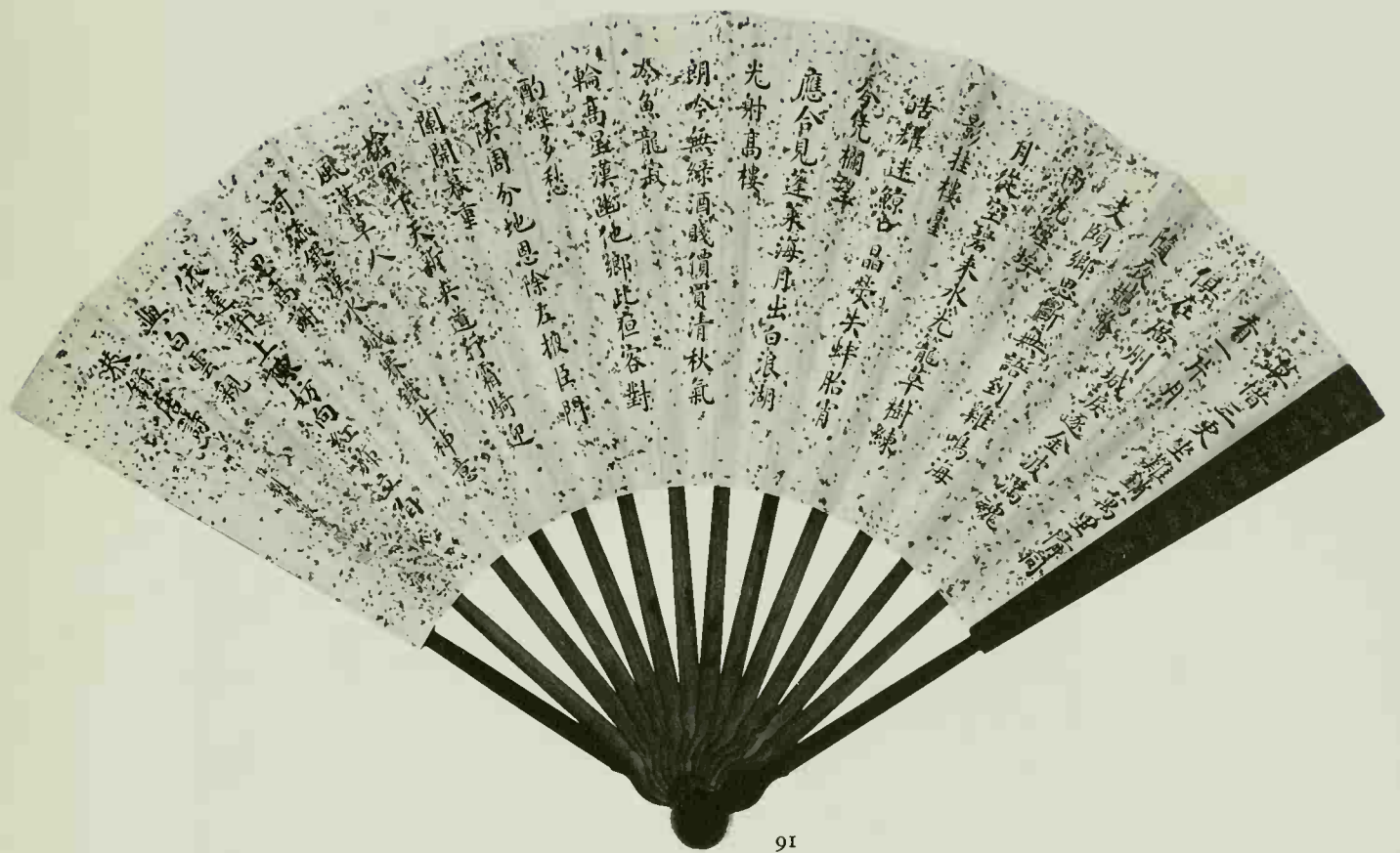
These poems from the T'ang dynasty are signed, "The humble Liu Yung wrote this with reverence." Two of his seals follow. A landscape appears on the reverse.

Liu Yung was called by many names, the best known being Shih-an. He was a native of Chu-ch'en (Shantung Province). He, too, achieved illustrious positions at the court, and was a well-known scholar in history and philosophy. He was also a fine poet, calligrapher, and a connoisseur of ink rubbings.

In his early years of calligraphic training, he, like many others, followed the tradition of Wang Hsi-chih (nos. 9, 10A-D). In his middle age, he moved more toward the manner of Su Shih (1036-1101). After the age of seventy, he entirely changed into the Northern stele style, and turned away completely from Wang Hsi-chih's graceful tradition to a plain and awkward archaism. His late writings are considered his best. His critics, however, said his writing was "clumsy, like ink blots." He was by no means modest with regard to his late, completely independent style. One of his admirers commented thus:

The early writing of Liu Shih-an [Yung] was smooth, like that of a young girl whose hair is decorated with flowers. In his middle age it became strong and firm, assuming the dignity of the Grand Secretary. Finally, it returned to a plainness forged by his inner maturity. Some remarked that his brush has more flesh than bone. This characteristic is his distinction. His script had then the concealed strength as of a *T'ai-chi* symbol [of the great eternity], which embraces the universe with a mysterious profundity.

His brushwork benefited from the model of the engraved steles. He concealed the tip, as if writing in the style often reproduced in rubbings.



## 92. Running Script

Ch'ing dynasty

Couplet

Wang Wen-chih (1730-1802)

Pair of hanging scrolls, ink on gold-specked paper

49½" x 11⅝" (each)

Collection Colonel and Mrs. Tong-lao, Honolulu

Before the writing of the poem are three small characters stating: "These [characters are] modeled after *Lan-t'ing hsü* [of Wang Hsi-chih, see no. 10B]. The couplet may be translated:

An essay written with inspiration is a heavenly joy,  
To relish at the right moment, is an age-old fascination.

Wang Wen-chih, also called Yü-ch'ing and Meng-lou, was from Tan-t'u (Kiangsu Province). He pursued a court career, and after retirement he continued literary pursuits. He was considered together with Yüan Mei (1716-1797) as one of the two best poets of his day. At the age of twenty-four he had been stationed in Liu-ch'iu (Okinawa), where his writing is still highly prized.

His calligraphic style followed the tradition of the classical school of Wang Hsi-chih, and especially the style of Chao Meng-fu (nos. 30, 31) and Tung Ch'ü-ch'ang (nos. 60-62). It is said that his writing was like that of a lady, more charming than vigorous. His style was in direct contrast to the massive antique manner of Liu Yung (no. 91). Wang Wen-chih was described as being as attractive and graceful as his own writing.



集契帖

文  
因  
興  
至  
天  
懷  
暢

樂  
興  
時  
隨  
古  
趣  
生

夢樓王文治



### 93. Running Script

Ch'ing dynasty

Couplet

Ch'ien Feng (1740–1795)

Pair of hanging scrolls, ink on paper decorated with auspicious symbols  
amid clouds in black and white

70¼" x 11½" (each)

The Art Museum, Princeton University

The writing may be translated as follows:

A gentleman who loves his people would act according to public opinion.

A scholar dedicated to his profession, follows one single concept—sincerity.

The writing is dedicated to a friend. On the first panel is written, "To Brother Feng-t'ing"; the second panel is signed, "The Younger One, Feng." One of the artist's seals follows his signature.

Ch'ien Feng was also known as Nan-yüan, Tung-chu, and Chieh-shih-sheng. His family was from Kunming (Yunnan Province). After advancing in academic graduation, he was raised to the post of Censor, and later became the Director of Education in Hunan. He was a conscientious official, and while he was Censor at the capital, his integrity led to a conflict with the powerful but corrupt Grand Councilor Ho-shen (1750–1799). He stood his ground courageously, and won temporary support from the court. When finally he was removed to the provinces, it was said that Ho-shen, by continuously demanding paperwork, day and night, worked Ch'ien Feng to death.

Ch'ien Feng never lived as a professional artist but mastered both painting and calligraphy exceedingly well. His horse painting is most original, resembling the style of Han tiles. His calligraphy appears more often in the regular style, close to the austere regular style of Yen Chen-ch'ing (no. 16). He preferred to use a blunt, worn brush in order to emphasize his archaic style. This couplet in running script is not in his usual manner, but nevertheless shows his sturdy personality. He was inspired by the honest Minister-Scholar Yen Chen-ch'ing, in more than one way. The paired phrases obviously speak of his own conviction as a government officer and as a gentleman-artist.

楓亭大兄

君子愛人  
齊手眾助

志士居業  
本此一誠

弟



## 94. Official Script

Ch'ing dynasty

Couplet

Teng Shih-ju (1743-1805)

Pair of hanging scrolls, ink on paper

48 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 11 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (each)

Honolulu Academy of Arts, Purchase, Martha Cooke Steadman Fund, 1965

The poem reads:

A Gentleman's appearance [attitude] is as plain as water.

The friends [around him, however] have the fragrance of orchids [aloof, with noble character].

It is signed, "Wan-pai, Teng Shih-ju." Two of his seals follow the signature; another is impressed on the first panel.

Teng Shih-ju's original name was Yen; his other names are Shih-ju, Wan-pai, Wan-pai shan-jen, and Chi-yu shan-jen. Born in a modest farming village in Anhwei Province, he began to practice the art of seal engraving at an early age. He was discovered by Magistrate Liang Hsien (act. 1762), a well-known calligrapher, who introduced him to a scholar whose fine collection of bronze and stone engravings was made available to him for study. After eight years of training, he began to travel widely. He worked as secretary to the famous Governor-General and historian Pi Yüan (1730-1797). After three years, he left Pi Yüan's service, once again wandering about and living from his professional writing.

Teng Shih-ju is considered the last versatile calligrapher of the Northern school. He mastered seal, official, regular, and cursive styles. His writing has a pre-T'ang monumentality: his use of brush is severe, his structure concise. Yet there are unexpected strokes that express his emotion without vulgar mannerisms.

君子澹如水



同人臭味若蘭

完白鄧石如



## 95. Official Script

Ch'ing dynasty

"The Path at Pine and Brook" (*Sung ch'uan ching*)

I Ping-shou (1754-1815)

1813

Handscroll, ink on paper

13 1/4" x 52 3/8"

Honolulu Academy of Arts, Purchase, 1964

The inscription of three large characters means "The Path at Pine and Brook," which is perhaps the name of a garden pavilion. It is signed, "I Ping-shou wrote the title." Two of his seals follow the signature; one appears before the first large character. Below it is the seal of the collector Chu Hsing-chai of Hong Kong.

I Ping-shou was also known as Tsu-szu and Mo-ch'ing. His family came from Ning-hua (Fukien Province). His father, who was a fine scholar, gave him a strict Neo-Confucian education. He passed the national civil examination and attained the position of Prefect. His administration operated with high ethical standards, and he was appreciated by the districts he governed. He built libraries, lectured at schools, sponsored the printing of books, and was well informed on the subject of law. But his manner irritated his colleagues and he was deprived of his position in about 1807. Later, in 1815, he returned to office as Prefect of Yangchow. When he died in office, the Yangchow populace included him in the "Three Sages Shrine," which honored the scholars Ou-yang Hsiu (1007-1072), Su Shih (1036-1101), and Wang Shih-chen (1634-1711). It has since been known as the "Four Sages Shrine."

His moral disposition is said to have been revealed in his art. His poetry, his literary composition, and his calligraphy are all in the same earnest and frank spirit. He preferred the ink rubbings of the Han and Northern steles, and did not like the calligraphy of Chao Meng-fu (nos. 30, 31).

I Ping-shou was particularly admired for his official and seal scripts, which he did in a completely original style. His strokes are straightforward, with no intricate brush modulation. The larger his writing is, the bolder and more heroic its aspect, with deep-set lines reminiscent of rubbings. But he was not very productive. This writing represents him at his best, revealing a great sense of design, which may be attributed to his early training in the art of seal engraving.



松泉逕

嘉慶癸酉

三月廿四日

伊秉綬題

## 96. Running Script

Ch'ing dynasty

Lines from "While Traveling from Ch'iung to Tan [along the coast of Hainan Island]" by Su Shih (1036-1101)

Ho Shao-chi (1799-1873)

Handscroll, ink on paper

27½" x 58"

Wango H. C. Weng Collection, New York

These lines from a poem by Su Shih may be translated:

Solitary thoughts suddenly shattered by the coming of Heaven's wind  
In waves like a thousand mountains move the fish  
In the myriad valleys brightly sound the organ pipes [*sheng*] and bells.

*Translation by Adele Rickett*

The inscription reads: "Su Tung-p'o's [Su Shih's] poem about the sea is strange and thrilling. Only after I had been at sea, did I understand his truthful description. Ho Shao-chi." Two of the artist's seals appear under his signature.

Ho Shao-chi's other names are Tzu-chen, Tung-chou, Yüan-sou ("The Old Ape Man"), and Yüan-pi-weng ("The Old Man with the Ape Arm"). He gave himself this last name because of his manner of writing. He did not support his elbow on the table, but suspended his whole arm in the air as in archery. History makes mention of the famous archer of the Han dynasty, General Li Kuang, who never missed a shot, and was called "The Ape Arm." Thus Ho Shao-chi also used the name, "The Old Man with the Ape Arm," for himself as a calligrapher.

Ho Shao-chi's family was illustrious. He and his twin, Ho Shao-yen, and two other brothers were all known for their calligraphy. At the age of twenty-four, he was admitted to the Han-lin Academy. He spent most of his life as a lecturer on the classics: he was devoted to the study of the engraved stone steles, and traveled widely to visit the sites of original steles. Tseng Kuo-fan (1811-1872) spoke of his talents: of his knowledge of ceremonial rites, of the *Shuo-wen* (the earliest known etymological dictionary), of poetry, and of calligraphy.

His calligraphy was influenced by Yen Chen-ch'ing (no. 16); he admired the Northern school, and did not like the Southern school of calligraphy. He favored the round middle tip, guiding as in the seal script. With great internal control, his brush appears to have gone beyond his intent. It shows a slight arrogance—he let the ink drip in blots—and a lack of patience for detail. Describing his own method of writing, he said:

When I write I always suspend my wrist [*hsüan-wan*], holding my brush with a strength that comes from my heel, travels through my body, and appears at my fingertips. The energy of my whole body is concentrated in the fingers, and then I move my brush. Not half finished, I would be soaking wet with sweat.

幽懷忽破碎  
依稀來天風  
千山動鱗甲  
萬壑酣金鎬  
東波海外待  
遂奇宏至此  
於遊兮絕果  
非虛語

何紹基







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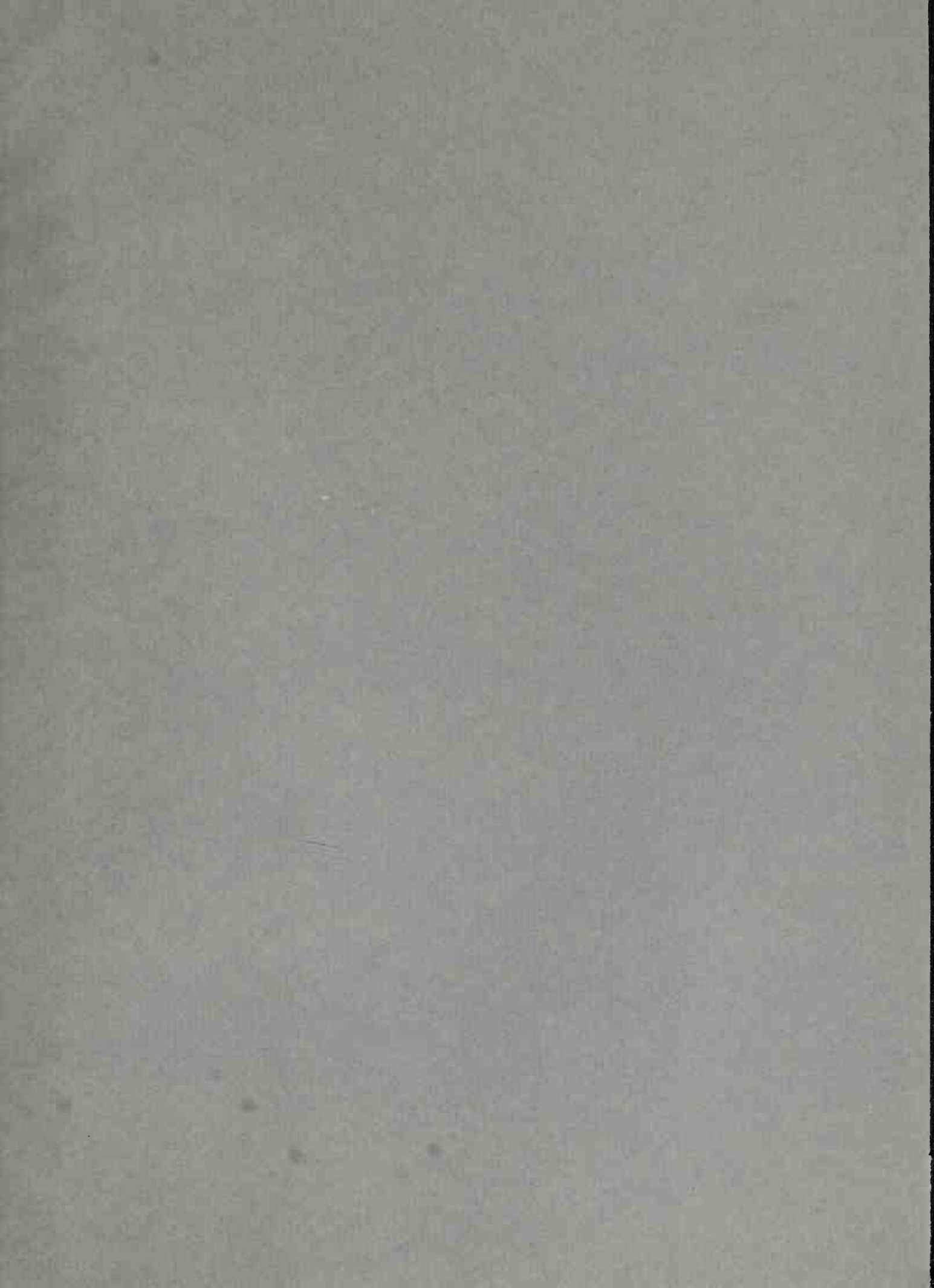






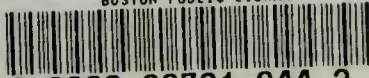








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